

COLLECTOR'S
EDITION

Holiday

bake FROM SCRATCH®

COOKIES

58 Merry
and Bright
Recipes

Holiday Hits

Red Velvet,
Gingerbread,
and More! ►

Around the World

in Holiday
Cookies

Decorated Dynamos:

Frosted
and Iced
Cookies

BAKE FROM SCRATCH
SPECIAL ISSUE

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DISPLAY UNTIL DECEMBER 19, 2022

PEPPERMINT
BARK-STUFFED
RED VELVET
COOKIES

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Get to know the all-star lineup of bakers behind each recipe in this special international *Holiday Cookies* issue

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Get a taste of holiday tradition from around the world with cookies from Italy, the US, the Philippines, and more

CHOCOLATE-PEPPERMINT DREAM BARS

The epitome of chocolate decadence and peppermint bliss, these holiday dream bars feature C&H® Granulated Sugar and receive an extra dose of flavor from the subtle molasses notes found in C&H® Light Brown Sugar.

Makes 12 bars

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (147 grams) firmly packed C&H® Light Brown Sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups (167 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (25 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- Peppermint Cream Cheese Filling (recipe follows)
- Ganache (recipe follows)
- Garnish: crushed peppermint candies (preferably soft)

1. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with foil, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Spray bottom of pan with baking spray with flour.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, beating well.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Press into bottom of prepared pan. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 20 minutes.

4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. Bake until fragrant, bounces back when touched, and top looks dry, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack.
6. Spread Peppermint Cream Cheese Filling on top of cooled cookie base. Freeze until set, at least 2 hours, or until ready to use.
7. Pour warm Ganache on top of filling, and spread evenly. Garnish with candies, if desired. Freeze until set, about 1 hour.
8. Using foil as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars. Let stand until slightly softened, about 30 minutes.

PEPPERMINT CREAM CHEESE FILLING

Makes 2½ cups

- 8 ounces (226 grams) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) C&H® Granulated Sugar
- 1 cup (240 grams) cold heavy whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese at medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute.

Add sugar, and beat at medium-low speed until sugar has melted and mixture is smooth, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on medium-low speed, add cold cream in a slow, steady stream. Thoroughly scrape down sides of bowl. Add peppermint extract, and slowly increase mixer speed to medium-high, beating until medium-stiff peaks form, about 1 minute.

GANACHE

Makes about 2 cups

- 8 ounces (226 grams) 70% cacao bittersweet chocolate, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup (240 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In a medium heatproof bowl, place chocolate and salt.
2. In a medium saucepan, heat cream over medium heat until bubbles form around edges of pan. (Do not boil.) Pour hot cream over chocolate; let stand for 5 minutes. Stir until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Use immediately.



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Of course, the holidays aren't just about cookies—they're about the people we share all those cookies with. This holiday season is an especially poignant one for me, as this is my first Christmas without my beloved grandmother Mimi. I spent many a holiday enjoying and helping her bake her soft and adorably decorated sugar cookies. She will be missed by my family this year—and every year—but each cookie I bake and share will be a toast to her sweet legacy.

Find the recipe for Mimi's Cookies and these Glazed Fruitcake Cookies at bakefromscratch.com/mimis-cookies.



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HELLO, HOLIDAYS! HOW I'VE MISSED YOU.

Each year, I can't wait to welcome the holiday season (what we call cookie season at *Bake from Scratch*). It's prime time for making and baking cookies with our beloved *Holiday Cookies* issue at hand. It promises the chance to add talented bakers to our roster, imagine new flavor combinations, and discover time-honored traditions from other cultures. This year's special issue is particularly dedicated to exploring the international side of baking.

From Peru to Australia, and with plenty of delicious stops in between, we tapped 13 fabulous bakers to create a multicultural cookie plate that spans not just countries but continents. Even though each cookie recipe hails from a specific place, all will fit beautifully in your cookie spread. And of course, among the new and exciting entries, like British Chocolate Hobnobs and Filipino Polvoron, are seasonal classics like sugar cookies, gingerbread, and red velvet. Speaking of red velvet, I'd be remiss not to mention the sweet tale behind our red-hot cover star, my Peppermint Bark-Stuffed Red Velvet Cookies.

Let me set the scene. 'Twas a late, late night (1 a.m. to be exact) in December in Paris, France, the City of Light and pâtisserie, and I was preparing for the Williams Sonoma Peppermint Bark-Off, a friendly holiday competition between bakers vying to create the best recipe using Williams Sonoma's Peppermint Bark. Jet-lagged and bleary-eyed, I raced to create a delicious cookie worthy of this classic treat in a Parisian apartment kitchen I'd never used before—the oven anxiety was real! I'd packed frozen cookie dough and peppermint bark in my carry-on, and now was the time to bring the two together. My Peppermint Bark-Stuffed Red Velvet Cookies are the result of that slightly manic yet merry time. Although I didn't win (Erin Jeanne McDowell remains the reigning champ), trust me when I say these cookies delight all who meet them.

Happy baking,

Brian

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief



Brian with past Bark-Off judges Umber Ahmad of Mah-Ze-Dahr Bakery, Amirah Kassem of Flour Shop, and Miro Uskokovic of Gramercy Tavern



Past Bark-Off contestants Vallery Lomas, Erin Jeanne McDowell, and Erin Clarkson

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

The Williams Sonoma Peppermint Bark-Off is held every year on December 1st, National Peppermint Bark Day. Make sure to check the Virtual and In Store Events page on williams-sonoma.com to get further details about this year's sweet competition.



PEPPERMINT BARK-STUFFED RED VELVET COOKIES

Makes about 28 cookies

Recipe by Brian Hart Hoffman

These ruby-red beauties are full of festive chocolate and peppermint flavor, from the chewy, cocoa-rich cookies to the smooth cream cheese filling and peppermint bark baked inside. A little more peppermint bark chopped and sprinkled on top is the tasty, textural addition that brings it all together.

- 1½ cups (340 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2¼ cups (450 grams) plus 3½ tablespoons (42 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 3 large eggs (150 grams), room temperature
- 1 (0.67-ounce) bottle (19 grams) red gel food coloring
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
- 4½ cups (563 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (43 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1½ tablespoons (22.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt, divided
- 8 ounces (226 grams) cream cheese, room temperature
- 1 (1-pound) package (454 grams) peppermint bark*, divided

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and 2¼ cups (450 grams) sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in food coloring and vanilla.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking powder, and ¼ teaspoon salt.

With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Cover and refrigerate until dough no longer sticks to your fingers when pinched, 30 to 45 minutes.

3. In another medium bowl, stir together cream cheese, remaining 3½ tablespoons (42 grams) granulated sugar, and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Cover and freeze for 15 minutes.

4. Cut 28 (½-inch) pieces of peppermint bark. Finely chop remaining peppermint bark.

5. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.

6. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 26 grams), and roll into balls. Press balls into 2½-inch disks. Scoop cream cheese mixture by 1½ teaspoonfuls (9 grams each), and place a ½-inch piece of peppermint bark in center of each, spreading cream cheese mixture to enclose peppermint bark. Place cream cheese mixture and peppermint bark in center of half of disks; cover with remaining disks, and crimp edges closed. Gently shape into balls, and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans; gently press into 2¼-inch disks, pressing together any cracks in edges, if necessary. (Refrigerate assembled disks until ready to bake.)

7. Bake, one batch at a time, until edges are dry and centers are slightly wet and puffed, 8 to 10 minutes. Immediately top each cookie with chopped peppermint bark. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

*We used Williams Sonoma Peppermint Bark.

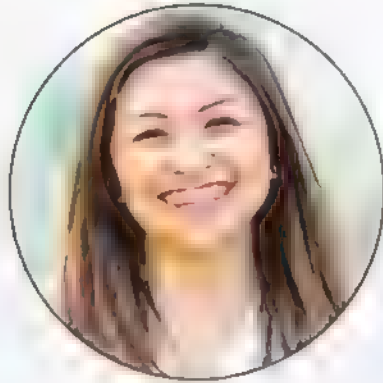
MEET THE *Bakers*

GET TO KNOW THE AMAZING BAKERS FEATURED
IN THIS MULTICULTURAL COOKIE COLLECTION

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Chocolate Peanut Crisp Rice
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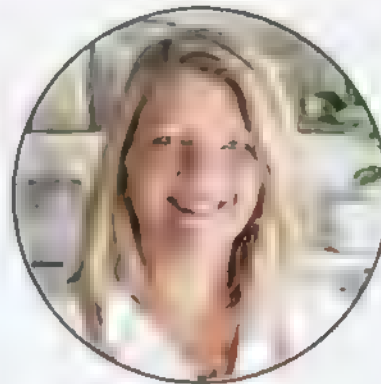
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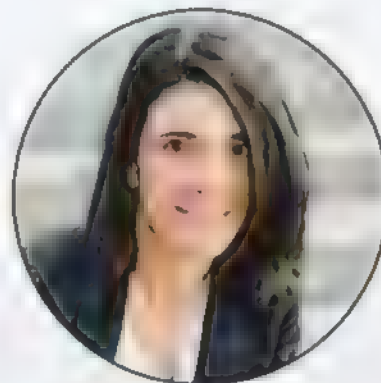
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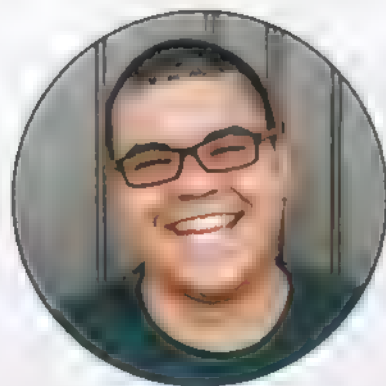
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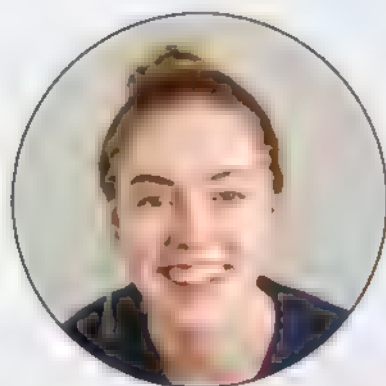
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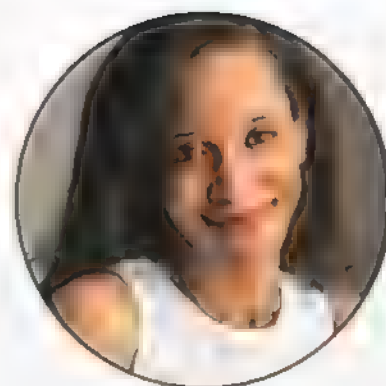
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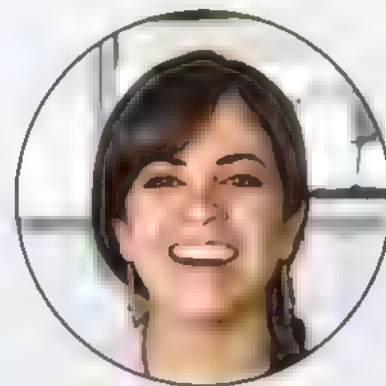
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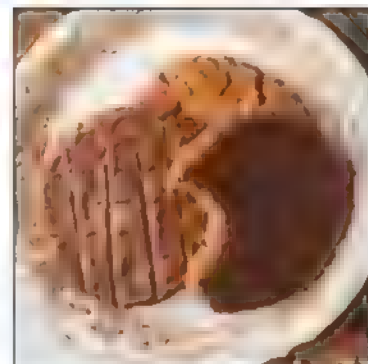
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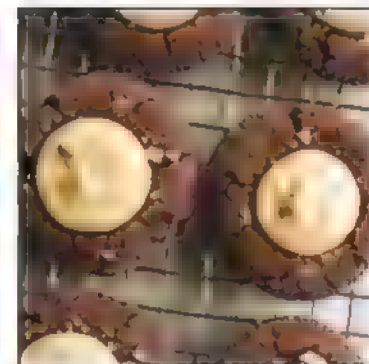
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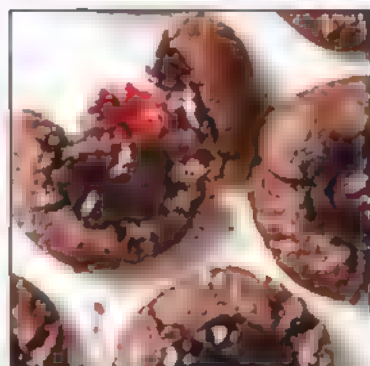
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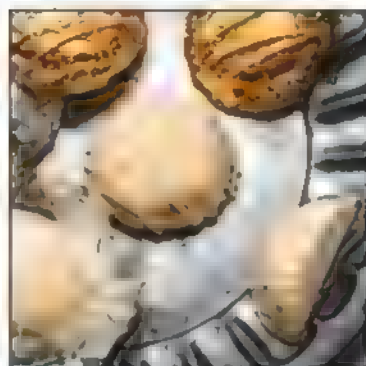
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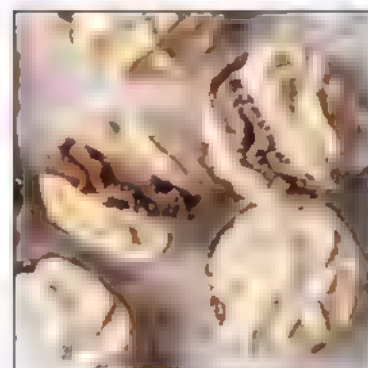
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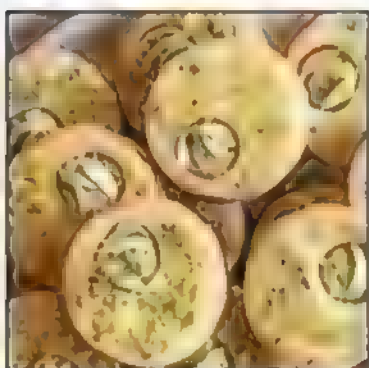
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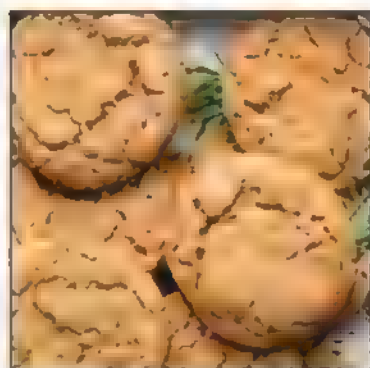
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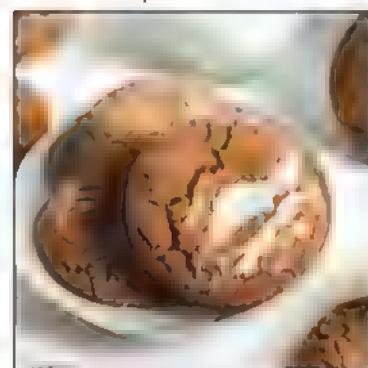
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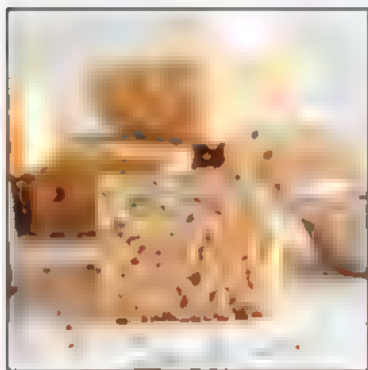
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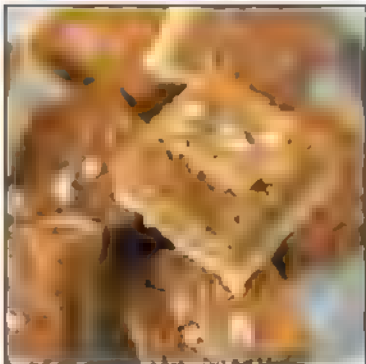
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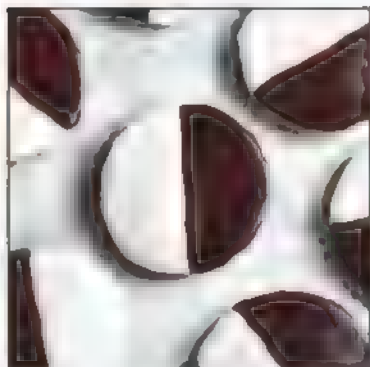
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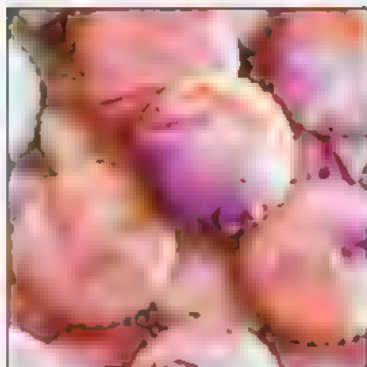
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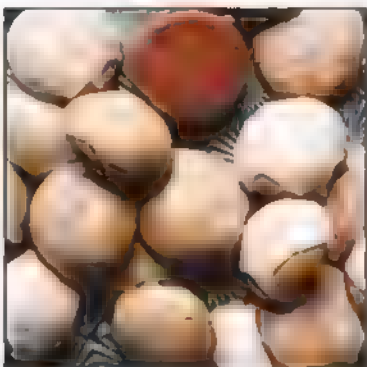
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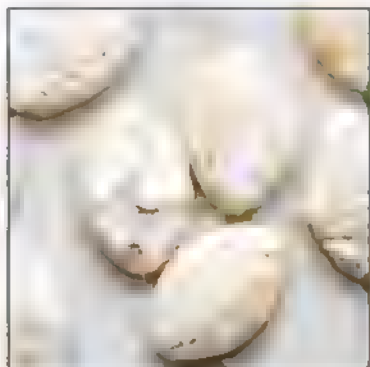
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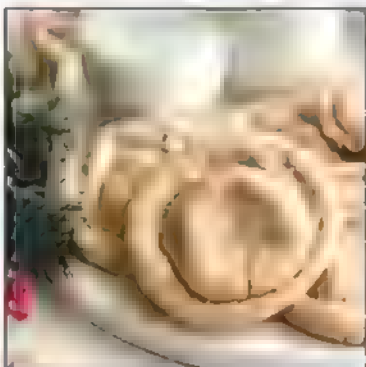
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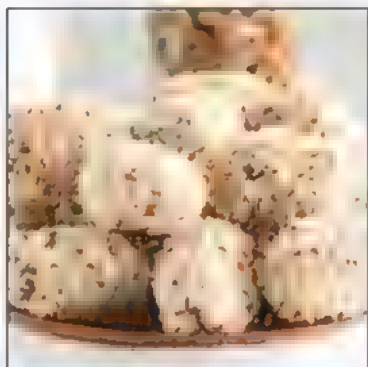
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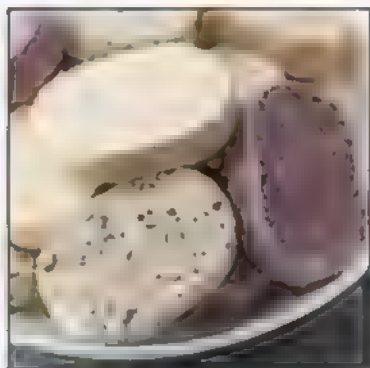
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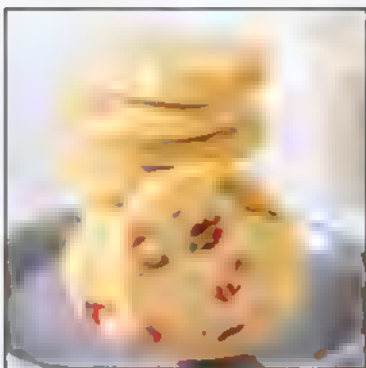
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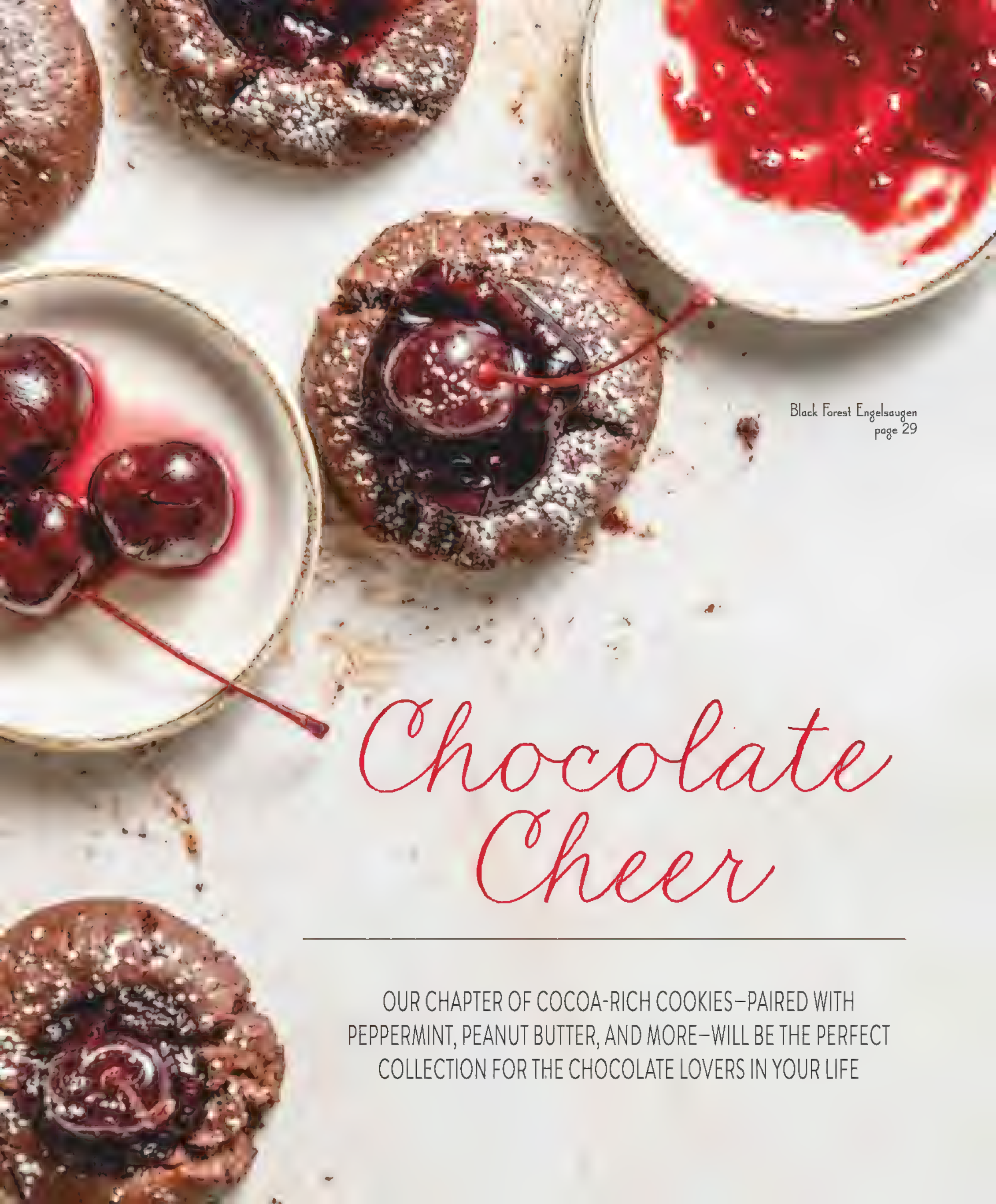


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Cherry Icebox Cookies 112



A top-down view of several round chocolate cookies on a white surface. The cookies are decorated with white icing, chocolate shavings, and fresh cherries. Some cookies are whole, while others are broken, revealing a soft interior. A small white bowl with a gold rim contains a red cherry sauce. A small white plate with a gold rim holds three cherries. The text 'Black Forest Engelsaugen page 29' is visible in the upper right corner.

Black Forest Engelsaugen
page 29

Chocolate Cheer

OUR CHAPTER OF COCOA-RICH COOKIES—PAIRED WITH
PEPPERMINT, PEANUT BUTTER, AND MORE—WILL BE THE PERFECT
COLLECTION FOR THE CHOCOLATE LOVERS IN YOUR LIFE





CHOCOLATE PEANUT CRISP RICE COOKIES

Makes 30 to 32 cookies

Recipe by Maryanne Cabrera

Choc Nut is a popular peanut and milk chocolate candy bar in the Philippines. Translate those iconic flavors into classic chocolate chunk cookies. These soft and chewy cookies are studded with milk chocolate chunks, chopped roasted peanuts, and crisp rice cereal.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¾ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (292 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (62 grams) packed peanut butter powder (see Notes)
- ¼ cup (32 grams) packed whole dry milk (see Notes)
- 3 tablespoons (15 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole milk, room temperature
- 6 ounces (170 grams) 31% cacao milk chocolate, roughly chopped
- 1½ cups (38 grams) crisp rice cereal
- ½ cup (67 grams) roughly chopped roasted peanuts

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and egg yolk, beating until combined. Beat in vanilla.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, peanut butter powder, dry milk, cocoa, baking soda, salt, and baking powder. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed just until combined. Add milk, and beat until combined. Gently fold in chocolate, cereal, and peanuts. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, preferably overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a size-24 cookie scoop (1.35 ounces or 2.7 tablespoons), scoop dough, and place 3 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until slightly puffed, tops are cracked, edges appear set, and bottoms are golden brown, 11 to 13 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. (See PRO TIP.) Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Serve warm or at room temperature. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Notes: Raw cookie dough balls may be frozen for later use. Bake from frozen for 14 to 16 minutes.

Peanut butter powder, also labeled as powdered peanut butter, is a combination of peanut flour, sugar, and salt.

Whole dry milk may be substituted with nonfat dry milk.

Photo by Maryanne Cabrera

PRO TIP

A 4-inch round cutter can be used to form still-warm cookies into a more circular shape, if desired. Place cutter around 1 cookie; gently move cutter in a circular motion while making contact with edges of cookie until desired shape is reached. A small offset spatula or spoon can also be used to nudge warm cookies into a more circular shape. Repeat as needed.

FROSTED PEPPERMINT BROWNIE COOKIES

Makes 12 cookies

Recipe by Mike Johnson

If you're looking for a cookie to take to your holiday potluck party or a cookie to give to your friends and family this holiday season, then look no further than these Frosted Peppermint Brownie Cookies. I mean, what's better (and more festive) than a fudgy brownie cookie topped with a fluffy, rich Peppermint Cream Cheese Frosting and crushed candy canes? Not much, guys. Not much.

- 6 ounces (170 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) unsalted butter
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (125 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) unsweetened natural or Dutch process cocoa powder
- 1 tablespoon (5 grams) black cocoa powder (see Note)
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) instant espresso powder
- Peppermint Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)
- Garnish: crushed peppermint candy

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the top of a double boiler, place chocolate and butter. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until melted and smooth. Remove from heat, and let cool slightly.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat sugars, eggs, and vanilla at medium-high speed until mixture resembles an extremely thick, pale yellow pancake batter, 5 to 6 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, add chocolate mixture, beating until smooth, about 2 minutes. Sift in flour, cocoas, salt, and espresso powder; using a rubber spatula, gently fold until just combined. (Mixture will be thick.)

4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until tops are crackled and shiny, 12 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for at least 10 minutes. Carefully remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

6. Place Peppermint Cream Cheese Frosting in a pastry bag fitted with an open star piping tip (Wilton 1M). Frost top of each cookie, and garnish with candy, if desired. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Note: *Black cocoa is an ultra-Dutch process cocoa powder, meaning all the acidity has been neutralized. The result is a cocoa powder that's completely mellow, non-bitter, and very black. (Think: Oreo cookies.) You can replace the black cocoa with an equal amount of regular or Dutch process cocoa powder if that's all you have on hand, but the final taste of the brownie cookies, while still delicious, will be a little different.*

PEPPERMINT CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 1 cup

- 4 ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) peppermint extract (see Note)
- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese, butter, and peppermint extract at medium-high speed until fluffy and combined, about 2 minutes.
2. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, about ½ cup (60 grams) at a time, beating until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

Note: *Peppermint extract is extremely potent, so be careful you don't add too much; a little goes a long way. Also, make sure you are using peppermint extract, not mint extract. The latter tastes like spearmint toothpaste (and trust me, it's not good).*

Photo by Mike Johnson





CHOCOLATE HOBNOBS

Makes 20 cookies

Recipe by Emma Duckworth

These hobnobs are a delightful rustic oatmeal biscuit with a milk chocolate coating. They're perfect for dunking in your English breakfast tea.

- 1⅓ cups (107 grams) Scottish porridge oats*
- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons (63 grams) golden syrup*
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- 1⅓ cups (226 grams) roughly chopped milk chocolate

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, stir together oats, flour, brown sugar, baking powder, and salt.
3. In a small saucepan, heat butter and golden syrup over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until butter is melted and mixture is combined. Remove from heat; add baking soda, and stir until combined. (Mixture will foam up.) Let cool for 5 minutes.
4. Add butter mixture to oat mixture, and stir until combined. Using your fingertips, squeeze mixture together, making sure to catch dry bits at bottom of bowl. Scoop dough by tablespoonfuls (30 grams each), and roll into balls. Place 3 inches apart on prepared pans. Flatten balls slightly.
5. Bake until deep golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. (The longer they bake, the crispier the cookies will be.) Using flat base of a measuring cup, immediately flatten cookies. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate on medium to high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted. Dip bottoms of cooled cookies into melted chocolate to coat, letting excess drip off. Place on a wire rack, and using a wooden skewer, run lines through chocolate. Let stand until chocolate is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**We used Bob's Red Mill Scottish Oatmeal and Lyle's Golden Syrup.*

Photo by Emma Duckworth

INSIDE-OUT PEANUT BUTTER BLOSSOMS

Makes about 30 cookies

Recipe by Kate Wood

These thumbprint cookies are an inside-out take on the classic peanut butter blossom. Here, a soft cocoa cookie is filled with a slightly sweetened peanut butter filling, making these treats a chocolate-peanut butter lover's dream.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, divided
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
1 large egg (50 grams)
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
 $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups (167 grams) all-purpose flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (43 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt
Peanut Butter Cup Filling (recipe follows)
Garnish: finely chopped honey-roasted peanuts

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar, and brown sugar at medium speed until well combined, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla just until combined.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed just until dough comes together, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Fold until combined.
3. Line 2 heavy-bottomed baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. In a small bowl, place remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar.
5. Using a 2-teaspoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough. Briefly roll each scoop in your hands to smooth; toss in sugar to coat. Using your thumb or the back of a rounded $\frac{1}{2}$ -teaspoon measuring spoon, gently make an indentation in center of each dough ball. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans, and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
7. Bake, one batch at a time, just until edges are set, about 10 minutes. Immediately press down centers. Let cool completely on pans.
8. Place Peanut Butter Cup Filling in a pastry bag fitted with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch round piping tip. Pipe swirls of filling into center of each cooled cookie. Garnish with peanuts, if desired. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

PEANUT BUTTER CUP FILLING

Makes about $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups

$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (64 grams) creamy peanut butter
 $3\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons (53 grams) whole milk

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth.

Photo by Kate Wood





JAFFA CAKES

Makes 24 Jaffa Cakes

Recipe by Emma Duckworth

Found in every biscuit supermarket aisle in the UK, these much-loved treats are popular year-round. With a light genoise sponge base and an orange-flavoured jelly layer topped with dark chocolate, it's hard to stop at just one.

- 1¾ cups (420 grams) fresh orange juice
- ½ cup (100 grams) plus ⅓ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- 2 tablespoons (40 grams) orange marmalade, rind strained out
- 1½ tablespoons (15 grams) unflavored gelatin
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- ¼ cup (31 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1⅓ cup (227 grams) chopped 70% cacao dark chocolate
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) unsalted butter

1. Line a 13x9-inch baking pan with plastic wrap, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. In a small saucepan, bring orange juice, ⅓ cup (67 grams) sugar, and marmalade to a low boil over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves. Add gelatin, and cook, stirring constantly, under dissolved. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a heatproof bowl. Let cool for 15 minutes. Pour cooled orange jelly mixture into prepared pan, and refrigerate until set, about 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Using a 2-inch round cutter, trace circles 2 inches apart on parchment. Turn parchment over.
4. In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat eggs and remaining ½ cup (100 grams) sugar at medium to high speed until pale and foamy, about 4 minutes. Sift flour over egg mixture, and fold with a rubber spatula until combined. Pour batter into a pastry bag, and cut a small opening in tip. Pipe batter into drawn circles.
5. Bake until lightly golden and cooked through, 7 to 9 minutes. Let cool completely on pans.
6. Using an offset spatula to help scrape under sponge cakes, remove cooled sponge cakes from pans, and place, upside down, on a wire rack.
7. Using excess plastic wrap as handles, remove jelly from pan. Using a 1¾-inch round cutter, cut circles from jelly. (See Note.) (They should be slightly smaller than the sponge cakes.) Using a metal spatula, lift jelly circles, one at a time, and place on top of each sponge cake.
8. In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat chocolate and butter on medium to high in 10-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth. Spoon chocolate mixture on top of jelly circles, using spoon to help push chocolate mixture over edges and to cover exposed sponge. Let stand on a wire rack until chocolate is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Note: You will only be able to cut 15 perfect circles of jelly from your 13x9-inch sheet but can piece together scraps of jelly for the other cookies. These will have less-clean edges but will still be delicious!

Photo by Emma Duckworth

BLACK FOREST ENGELSAUGEN

Makes 16 cookies

Recipe by Audrey Leonard

Inspired by both a classic Black Forest cake and traditional Engelsaugen (angel's eye) cookies, Black Forest Engelsaugen are decadent chocolate cookies with tart cherry jam centers that balance out the richness of the chocolate.

- ⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon (95 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 3.5 ounces (100 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**
- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon (135 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup (21 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 3 tablespoons plus 1½ teaspoons (75 grams) tart cherry jam**
- 16 jarred Bada Bing or sour cherries (optional)**
- Garnish: confectioners' sugar**

1. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, place butter and chocolate. Heat on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted.
2. Transfer chocolate mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer, and add confectioners' sugar. Using the whisk attachment, beat at medium-low speed until combined. Add egg and vanilla, and beat until combined.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, and salt. Add flour mixture to chocolate mixture, and fold with a rubber spatula until combined. (Dough will be quite soft.)
4. Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper.
5. Using a 1½-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 30 grams each), and carefully roll into balls. Place on prepared pan. Using a teaspoon measuring spoon, gently make an indentation in center of each ball. Press together any cracks, if necessary. (It is OK if they have smaller cracks.) Refrigerate for 1 hour.
6. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
7. Place dough 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Spoon about 1 teaspoon (6 grams) jam into each indentation, being careful not to overfill.
8. Bake until jam center is shiny but cookie looks slightly dried, 10 to 12 minutes, rotating pan after 6 minutes of baking. (A little jam may leak out during baking; this is normal.) Immediately press 1 cherry (if using) into jam center of each cookie. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days. (If possible, do not stack the cookies when storing, as the cherries and jam will stick to the bottom of another cookie.)

Photo by Audrey Leonard





MINT CHOCOLATE CREAMS

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

In the UK, baking Christmas cookies isn't really a big a thing like it is in the US. The one tradition we do have, though, is the tins of Christmas cookies (biscuits if you're in the UK) that we all seem to buy during the Christmas season. Sold in every supermarket, they vary a little in their contents, but my favourite in any of these boxes is the chocolate cream, a thin, crisp cookie topped with a flavoured buttercream, with flavours such as orange and vanilla, and coated in chocolate. For my homemade version, I made a thin black cocoa cookie, topped it with mint buttercream, and coated it in white chocolate.

Cookies:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (126 grams) granulated sugar
- 1¼ cup (158 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (21 grams) black cocoa powder or Dutch process cocoa powder
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt

Filling:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter
- Pinch fine sea salt
- 2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons (12 grams) vanilla bean paste
- 1 to 2 teaspoons (4 to 8 grams) peppermint extract

Coating:

- 21 ounces (600 grams) white chocolate

1. For cookies: In the bowl of stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cocoa, baking soda, and salt; whisk together. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed just until combined. (The mixture may look a touch dry—but not floury—but if you squeeze some of the mixture, it should hold together.)

3. Turn out dough, and using your hands, bring together into a ball. Shape into 2 (1½-inch-thick) logs (about 208 grams each), and wrap in parchment paper. Refrigerate until firm, about 2 hours.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 (18x13-inch) baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Using a sharp thin-bladed paring knife, cut dough logs into 24 (¼-inch-thick) rounds, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
6. Bake until edges are dry and crisp and centers are fully set, about 15 minutes. Let cool completely on pan.
7. For filling: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at medium speed until smooth and creamy. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until well combined. Add vanilla bean paste and peppermint extract; increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Place filling in a pastry bag; cut a ½-inch opening in tip. Pipe a shallow dome of filling on top of each cookie. Let stand for about 1 hour. (This helps the filling start to crust and adhere itself fully to the cookie.)
8. For coating: In the top of a double boiler, place white chocolate. Heat over simmering water, stirring constantly, until melted. Remove from heat, and let stand until slightly less fluid, about 10 minutes.
9. Add cookies, one at a time, to melted white chocolate to completely coat. Using a fork, lift cookies, letting excess drip off. Place coated cookies on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Refrigerate until set, about 15 minutes.
10. Transfer any remaining melted white chocolate to a pastry bag; cut a ¼-inch opening in tip. Pipe random lines of white chocolate over cookies. (Alternatively, using a spoon, drizzle any remaining melted white chocolate over cookies.) Refrigerate until fully set. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

Photo by Edd Kimber

PRO TIP

To give the look of the shop-bought cookies, I like to wrap these in squares of gold and silver foil, but this is optional and, of course, just for presentation.

Stellar Sandwich COOKIES

STEP UP YOUR HOLIDAY COOKIE BAKING GAME WITH THESE PERFECTLY PAIRED
COOKIES AND FILLINGS, FROM LEMONY CUSTARD CREAMS TO CRISP PECAN COOKIES
WITH CHOCOLATE MANJAR BLANCO



Fruitcake
Whoopie Pies
page 40



PECAN ALFAJORES WITH CHOCOLATE MANJAR BLANCO

Makes about 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Lorena Salinas

Alfajores are simply delicious. They are everywhere in South America, and Peru is no exception. This one is a twist on the classic, filled with Chocolate Manjar Blanco and with finely chopped pecans added to the dough.

- ⅔ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
- 4 teaspoons (8 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) salt**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water**
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ⅔ cup (75 grams) finely chopped pecans**
- Chocolate Manjar Blanco (recipe follows)**

- 1.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, and salt at high speed for 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolk and 1 tablespoon (15 grams) water, and beat until combined. Add flour and pecans, and beat until combined. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. (If it's refrigerated for longer, let stand at room temperature for a few minutes until it's softer.)
- 2.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
- 3.** Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and roll to about ⅛-inch thickness. Using a 2-inch round cutter, cut dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

- 4.** Bake, one batch at a time, until very lightly golden, 10 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

- 5.** Place Chocolate Manjar Blanco in a pastry bag fitted with desired piping tip. Pipe onto flat side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of filling. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

PRO TIP

It's important to have your pecans really finely chopped so that rolling out the dough is easy.

CHOCOLATE MANJAR BLANCO

Makes 2⅔ cups

- 1¼ cups (396 grams) sweetened condensed milk**
- 1¼ cups (315 grams) evaporated milk**
- 7 ounces (200 grams) 65% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**

- 1.** In a large stockpot, heat all ingredients over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened, 20 to 25 minutes. (When you stir, you should be able to see the bottom of the pot for 3 seconds before it covers back up.) Transfer to a heatproof bowl, and let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days, or freeze in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Photo by Lorena Salinas

LEMON CUSTARD CREAMS

Makes about 30 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Emma Duckworth

These classic British sandwich cookies are made of sweet, crumbly custard biscuits filled with a creamy Lemon Custard Buttercream. They are a nostalgic childhood treat, perfect as a crowd-pleasing snack.

½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
⅓ cup (67 grams) superfine castor sugar
1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
½ cup (65 grams) custard powder
½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine salt
Lemon Custard Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and castor sugar at medium-high speed until pale and creamy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Sift flour, custard powder, and salt over butter mixture, and beat at low speed until combined. (Dough will look crumbly but will come together when pressed together.) Using floured hands, gently bring dough together. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. On a lightly floured surface, using a floured rolling pin, roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 1½-inch round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. (See Note.) Refrigerate for 30 minutes. (Note that this is a soft dough, and if it softens whilst cutting out the rounds, place dough on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet, refrigerate for 15 minutes, and then proceed with the recipe.)
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. Bake until lightly golden, 9 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

6. Spoon Lemon Custard Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with desired piping tip*. Pipe buttercream onto flat side of half of cookies. (Alternatively, use a teaspoon to spoon the buttercream onto the cookies). Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream, and gently press together. Let stand until buttercream has firmed up. Refrigerate any remaining buttercream in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks. Store cookies in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

**We used a ½-inch closed star piping tip.*

Note: *To create the dot detail along the rim of the cookies, use a wooden pick or skewer to make shallow pricks along the edge of the unbaked cookie discs.*

LEMON CUSTARD BUTTERCREAM

Makes 1½ cups

⅓ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, softened
Zest of 1 lemon
2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar
½ cup (65 grams) custard powder
½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine salt
1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice, plus more if necessary

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and lemon zest at medium speed until pale, about 2 minutes. Sift confectioners' sugar, custard powder, and salt over butter mixture, and beat until combined, about 4 minutes. (Mixture will look crumbly.) Add lemon juice, and beat until fluffy and softened, about 1 minute. Add more lemon juice, 1 teaspoon (5 grams) at a time, if necessary, and beat until combined.

Photo by Emma Duckworth





FRUITCAKE WHOOPIE PIES

Makes about 16 whoopie pies

Jam-packed with rum-soaked fruit and warm holiday spices, this whoopie pie twist on classic fruitcake comes equipped with a divine Spiced Rum Buttercream.

- 1½ cups (300 grams) spiced rum
- 1 cup (205 grams) finely chopped candied red and green cherries, plus more for topping
- ½ cup (111 grams) finely chopped candied pineapple
- ½ cup (110 grams) finely chopped candied orange peel, plus more for topping
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 3 tablespoons (63 grams) molasses (not blackstrap)
- 2½ cups (313 grams) plus 4 teaspoons (12 grams) all-purpose flour, divided
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
- 6 tablespoons (90 grams) heavy whipping cream, room temperature
- ½ cup (57 grams) chopped toasted pecans*, plus more for topping

Spiced Rum Buttercream (recipe follows)

1. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, combine rum, cherries, pineapple, and orange peel; heat on high in 1-minute intervals, stirring between each, until hot and steaming, about 2 minutes. Let stand at room temperature for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Drain cherry mixture, reserving 4 teaspoons (20 grams) rum.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition. Beat in molasses and reserved 4 teaspoons (24 grams) rum. (Mixture may look a bit broken, but batter will come together.)
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together 2½ cups (313 grams) flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with cream, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until nearly combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

5. In another medium bowl, stir together drained cherry mixture, pecans, and remaining 4 teaspoons (12 grams) flour. Fold cherry mixture into batter just until combined.
6. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop batter (about 45 grams each), stirring every few scoops to make sure mix-ins are evenly dispersed, and place at least 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
7. Bake, one batch at a time, for 8 minutes. Gently press more cherries, orange peel, and pecans into tops, if desired. Using a spoon, a small offset spatula, or a large round cutter (see Note), shape cookies into a more rounded shape if needed. Bake until edges and bottoms are golden and tops appear dry, about 4 minutes more. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.
8. Spoon Spiced Rum Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with a ⅞-inch French open star piping tip (Ateco #865). Pipe onto flat side of half of cooled cookies. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on top of buttercream. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.

*We used Schermer Pecans.

Note: To form parbaked cookies with a spoon or a small offset spatula, simply use the tips of each to nudge edges into a more rounded shape. To use a round cutter, place it around 1 cookie; gently move cutter in a circular motion while making contact with edges of cookie until desired shape is reached. Repeat as needed.

SPICED RUM BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 3 cups

- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) spiced rum
- 4½ cups (540 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and salt at medium speed until creamy, 30 seconds to 1 minute; scrape sides of bowl.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together cream and rum.
3. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar to butter mixture alternately with cream mixture, beginning and ending with confectioners' sugar, beating just until combined after each addition and stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Use immediately.

SILVANAS (SYLVANAS)

Makes about 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Maryanne Cabrera

A true labor of love! Silvanas are the cookie version of the popular Sans Rival cake. This oblong-shaped chilled sandwich cookie consists of crispy cashew meringue and rich buttercream coated with graham cracker crumbs.

Meringue:

- 5 large egg whites (150 grams), room temperature
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) cream of tartar
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1¾ cups (268 grams) finely ground unsalted toasted cashews (⅛-inch pieces or smaller; see Notes)

Buttercream:

- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water
- 5 large egg yolks (93 grams)
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Coating:

- 2 cups (224 grams) finely ground graham cracker crumbs
- ½ cup (72 grams) packed ground cashews

1. Using a 3¼x2¼-inch oval cutter, trace 14 ovals about 1 inch apart on a sheet of parchment paper. (See Notes.)
2. Preheat oven to 225°F (107°C). Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. For meringue: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites and cream of tartar at medium-low speed until foamy. With mixer on medium-low speed, add sugar in a slow, steady stream, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until shiny, stiff peaks form, 10 to 12 minutes.
4. Add salt to meringue. Using a spatula, gently fold in cashews in three additions. (Do not overmix.) Transfer to a large pastry bag fitted with a ⅞-inch round piping tip (Ateco #805). Place template under parchment on a prepared pan. Holding piping tip perpendicular to parchment paper on prepared pan, fill in traced ovals. Gently remove template; repeat procedure with remaining pans and remaining meringue mixture.
5. Bake until dry and firm to the touch, 2 to 2½ hours, rotating pans halfway through baking. (See Notes.) Let cool completely on pans. Peel cooled ovals off parchment paper.

6. For buttercream: In a small saucepan, combine sugar and 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves. Increase heat to high, and cook, without stirring, until a candy thermometer registers 234°F (112°C) to 240°F (116°C).

7. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg yolks at medium-high speed until thick and pale.

8. With mixer on medium-low speed, add hot sugar syrup to egg yolks in a slow, steady stream, being careful not to let sugar hit sides of bowl or whisk. Increase mixer speed to medium-high, and beat until bottom of bowl feels cool to the touch or an instant-read thermometer inserted in meringue registers 75°F (24°C) to 80°F (27°C), 5 to 7 minutes.

9. Switch to the paddle attachment. With mixer on medium-low speed, add butter, 1 tablespoon (14 grams) at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and salt. (Mixture may look a bit broken, but it will come back together.) Beat until smooth and creamy, 5 to 7 minutes.

10. For coating: In a large shallow bowl, combine cracker crumbs and cashews.

11. Pair up cookies. Spread about 2 teaspoons (7 grams) buttercream on bumpy side of half of cookies. Place remaining cookies, bumpy side down, on top of buttercream. Spread a thin layer of buttercream all over outside of sandwiched cookies, including edges, scraping away any excess.

12. Place buttercream-coated sandwich cookies in cracker mixture, coating generously. Place on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Freeze for 1 hour. Refrigerate in an airtight container until ready to serve. Serve chilled.

Notes: *Toast unsalted cashews at 350°F (180°C), stirring occasionally. Once completely cool, place in the work bowl of a food processor, and pulse until finely ground, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Measure and use as directed.*

Easter egg cookie cutters are the perfect shape. Alternatively, use a similarly sized round cutter. Some computer word processing programs also allow you to create oval shapes with the desired dimensions; you can print and use these as a tracing template.

Baking time may vary depending on the humidity of your environment and the amount of moisture in the meringue mixture.

Fully assembled cookies may be frozen in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

Photo by Maryanne Cabrera





FLOWER JELLY COOKIES

Makes 18 to 20 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Dikla Frances

Shortbread cookies take you a long way in Israel, especially since they are excellent for dipping into afternoon coffee or tea. You only need a very small amount of strawberry preserves to make these buttery, tender, and crumbly shortbread cookies the famous cookies they are.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (333 grams) all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup (32 grams) cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon (5 teaspoon) baking powder
- ½ cup (160 grams) strawberry preserves
- 3 tablespoons (21 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, and beat until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cornstarch, and baking powder; whisk until combined. With mixer on low speed, add flour mixture to butter mixture in three additions, beating until a soft dough forms. (No need to wait for the flour to fully combine after the first two additions; this is simply to prevent the flour from going all over the place.)
4. Lightly flour work surface and rolling pin. Divide dough in half, and place it on prepared surface. Roll both halves to ¼-inch thickness. Using a 2-inch flower-shaped cutter, cut dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Using a small round cutter, cut circles from center of half of cookies.
5. Bake until bottoms are lightly browned, 13 to 15 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. Place 1 teaspoon (6 grams) preserves each in center of flat side of all solid cookies. Dust top of remaining cookies with confectioners' sugar, and place, flat side down, on top of preserves. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Notes: *The cookies get softer once they are filled with the preserves.*

You can freeze the cookies in an airtight container for up to 8 weeks before filling.

If using a light-colored baking sheet, increase the baking time to 22 to 25 minutes.

If the dough is too soft, roll it between two pieces of parchment paper, and refrigerate for 1 to 2 hours.

Photo by Dikla Frances

SPEKULATIUS SPRITZ COOKIES WITH WHIPPED CHOCOLATE GANACHE

Makes 14 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Audrey Leonard

Inspired by Gewürz Spekulatius, these spekulatius spiced spritz cookies sandwiched with a whipped dark chocolate ganache are the perfect combination of textures and flavors that will instantly put you in the holiday spirit.

- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
- ⅓ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar**
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- ¾ cup (180 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream, divided**
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract**
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) almond extract**
- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves**
- ¼ teaspoon ground anise seed**
- 3 ounces (86 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped**

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

- 1.** Place oven racks in bottom third and top third of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, brown sugar, and granulated sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cream, and extracts; beat at low speed until combined.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, cardamom, baking powder, cloves, and anise seed. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until fully combined.
- 4.** Transfer half of dough to a pastry bag fitted with a large star piping tip. Starting from the outside and going in, pipe dough in 1½-inch rounds, pressing down gently as you stop squeezing bag, 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
- 5.** Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, swapping and rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool completely on pans.
- 6.** In a medium heatproof bowl, place chocolate.
- 7.** In a small saucepan, heat remaining ¾ cup (180 grams) cream over low heat just until bubbles form around edges of pan. (Do not boil.)
- 8.** Pour warm cream over chocolate, and let stand for 1 minute. Whisk until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Let cool completely, whisking occasionally.
- 9.** Beat chocolate mixture with a mixer fitted with the whisk attachment at medium speed until light and fluffy. (If it isn't stiffening, refrigerate for 5 minutes and try again. If it seems too soft after whipping, refrigerate for 5 minutes to firm up slightly.)
- 10.** Transfer ganache to a pastry bag fitted with a ½-inch star piping tip. Pipe a rosette onto flat side of half of cookies, leaving a ¼-inch border around edges. Place remaining cookies, flat side down, on ganache, and gently press down so it sticks to ganache. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store unfilled cookies in an airtight container for up to 5 days. Refrigerate filled cookies in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Photo by Audrey Leonard





VOLADOR COOKIES

Makes 30 cookies

Recipe by Lorena Salinas

Volador translates to “something that flies,” and it’s usually the size of a cake. The layers of crispy inflated dough make the dessert look almost like it’s about to lift off. These are the same dessert but in cookie form. The mix of apricot jam and Manjar Blanco (the Peruvian version of dulce de leche) is a dream.

- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons (21 grams) confectioners’ sugar
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) salt
- 4 large egg yolks (74 grams)
- ¼ cup (60 grams) Peruvian pisco*
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon (30 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water
- Manjar Blanco (recipe follows)
- ¾ cup plus 1½ tablespoons (250 grams) thick apricot jam
- Garnish: confectioners’ sugar

1. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, confectioners’ sugar, and salt. Add egg yolks, pisco, melted butter, and 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water, and stir with a spatula until almost combined. Knead in bowl just until combined. (Dough should look homogeneous.) Cover and let stand for 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and roll until it’s very thin (about ⅛ inch). Lift dough, and re-flour work surface. Using a 2-inch round cutter, cut dough. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Using a fork, poke 3 sets of holes in each dough circle.
4. Bake, one batch at a time, until cookies look pale but with bits of golden where bubbles form, 5 to 8 minutes. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Group similarly sized cookies in sets of 3.

5. Pipe Manjar Blanco on a cookie. Place another cookie on top, and spread about 1 teaspoon (7 grams) jam on top. Top with third cookie. Repeat with remaining cookies, remaining Manjar Blanco, and remaining jam. Garnish with confectioners’ sugar, if desired.

*Vodka can be used instead of pisco, if desired.

PRO TIP

The dough is very elastic, so it will be a bit of work to get it thin. Make sure to constantly lift and dust the surface so it returns to where it wants to be before rolling it out more and cutting. Otherwise, you’ll have ovals instead of circles.

MANJAR BLANCO

Makes 1½ cups

- 1½ cups (396 grams) sweetened condensed milk
- 1¼ cups (315 grams) evaporated milk

1. In a large stockpot, heat milks over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened, 20 to 25 minutes. (When you stir, you should be able to see the bottom of the pot for 3 seconds before it covers back up.) Transfer to a heatproof bowl, and let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days, or freeze in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

PRO TIP

Using a large stockpot (larger than necessary) for making Manjar Blanco helps reduce the time it takes to cook by increasing the surface area that’s in contact with the heat.

Photo by Lorena Salinas

FENNEL SHORTBREAD WITH PISTACHIO BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 24 sandwich cookies

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

Fennel is used widely across the Indian community as an after-meal mouth freshener. Fennel is an underrated spice that adds a wonderful licorice flavor to any baked good. These fennel shortbreads are fantastic by themselves, but with the creamy pistachio buttercream in the center, the entire cookie is elevated. These pretty sandwich cookies make the perfect holiday gift.

Shortbread:

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups (294 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (8 grams) cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons (5 grams) coarsely ground toasted fennel seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
- 2 tablespoons (22 grams) finely chopped pistachios
- 2 to 3 tablespoons (24 to 36 grams) white sanding sugar

Buttercream:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
- 2 tablespoons (32 grams) pistachio cream*
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups (210 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) whole milk
- Green gel food coloring*

1. For shortbread: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until creamy, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in vanilla.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, fennel seeds, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Turn out dough onto a sheet of plastic wrap. Shape into a disk, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Position oven racks in bottom and center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. (Keep remaining dough refrigerated until ready to use.) Using a 2-inch round cutter, cut dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
5. Combine scraps, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm.
6. Bake until lightly golden brown, 11 to 15 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
7. On a lightly floured surface, roll remaining dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Using a 2-inch round cutter, cut dough, and place 1 inch apart on prepared pans. Using a $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch round cutter, cut off-center circles from cookies. Sprinkle with pistachios; sprinkle with sanding sugar. Press very gently to adhere. Freeze for 10 minutes.
8. Combine scraps, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm.
9. Bake until lightly golden brown, 10 to 14 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
10. Repeat procedure with scraps, cutting off-center circles from half of dough circles and baking solid dough circles and ones with cutouts on different pans.
11. For buttercream: In a large bowl, place butter, vanilla, and salt. Using a rubber spatula, stir vigorously until butter is light and fluffy, about 1 minute. Add pistachio cream, and stir until combined. Add confectioners' sugar and milk, and stir until completely combined. Stir in food coloring. (Make sure the buttercream is not too soft. If soft, add confectioners' sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup [30 grams] at a time, until it is firm yet pliable.)
12. Transfer buttercream to a 12-inch pastry bag fitted with a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch open star piping tip (Wilton 1M). Pipe buttercream onto flat side of solid cookies, leaving a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch border around edges. Place cookies with cutouts, flat side down, on top of buttercream; gently press down. Store in an airtight container in a cool place for up to 1 week, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

**We used Sciara Spreadable Italian Pistachio Cream and Americolor Soft Gel Paste Food Color in Avocado.*

Photo by Amisha Gurbani



Sweet on Spice

THIS CHAPTER PROVES THERE'S NOTHING MORE COMFORTING THAN THE SWEET SMELL
OF SPICES LIKE CINNAMON AND GINGER DRIFTING THROUGH THE KITCHEN AS YOU
BAKE HOLIDAY FAVORITES LIKE GINGERSNAPS AND SNICKERDOODLES



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CHEWY GINGER MOLASSES SNICKERDOODLES

Makes about 25 cookies

Recipe by Kate Wood

Sugar, spice, and everything nice flavor these ginger molasses snickerdoodles. With a subtle use of molasses and a chewy texture throughout, these cookies are sure to be your new cozy favorite.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (85 grams) unsulphured molasses
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 grams) pure vanilla extract
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground cinnamon, divided
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (3 grams) cream of tartar
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (3 grams) ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until smooth and fluffy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add molasses, and beat until combined; scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg and vanilla just until smooth.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (3 grams) cinnamon, cream of tartar, ginger, baking soda, salt, and cloves. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until combined and a soft dough comes together, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. In a small bowl, combine granulated sugar and remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (3 grams) cinnamon.
5. Using a $1\frac{1}{2}$ -tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and roll in your hands to smooth; roll each dough piece in cinnamon sugar. Place on prepared pan, and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.
6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
7. Place dough balls 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
8. Bake, one batch at a time, until tops are cracked and beginning to set, about 11 minutes. Let cool slightly. Store completely cool cookies in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Photo by Kate Wood

MUSTACCIUOLI NAPOLETANI

Makes 32 cookies

Recipe by Roberta Dall'Alba

Thick diamond-shaped cookies with a spicy flavour and a chocolaty delicious dough and glaze—ready to fall in love? Even though these are typical in Campania, Italy, there are different variations in other southern regions, too. The original recipe calls for pisto spice, a mix of cinnamon, cloves, star anise, coriander seed, and nutmeg. This simplified version calls for cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves, so it's easily replicable.

- 2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (64 grams) almond flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (21 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) Pisto Spices Mix (recipe follows)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) tightly packed orange zest (about $\frac{1}{2}$ orange)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (90 grams) fresh orange juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) water
- 10.5 ounces (300 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate
- 1.6 ounces (50 grams) milk chocolate (optional)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat all-purpose flour, sugar, almond flour, cocoa, Pisto Spices Mix, baking soda, salt, and orange zest at low speed until orange zest is evenly dispersed, about 1 minute. With mixer on medium speed, add orange juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) water in a slow, steady stream, beating until the dough has the consistency of a soft shortbread cookie dough.
2. Turn out dough, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven at 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Lightly flour a large sheet of parchment paper. Turn out dough onto prepared parchment, and top with a second large sheet of parchment. Roll dough between

parchment to $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch thickness. Using diamond-shaped cutters, cut dough, rerolling scraps once. (The original mustacciuoli are big [3 to 4 inches or 8 to 10 cm], but you can make them smaller like I did using $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch or 4.5 cm cutters.) (Alternatively, using a pizza cutter, cut dough into strips; cut strips into rhomboids.) Place at least 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes. (For softer cookies, bake for 10 minutes. For crunchier cookies, bake for 14 to 15 minutes.) Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

6. In the top of a double boiler, place dark chocolate (separately, if using). Cook over simmering water, stirring frequently, until melted and smooth. Repeat procedure with milk chocolate. (Alternatively, in microwave-safe bowls, heat chocolates separately on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth.) Let cool slightly. (Keep an eye on it; the chocolate could set and harden too much.)

7. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, and place a wire rack on top.

8. Pour chocolate into a wide-mouthed bowl, and dip each cookie into it. Wipe off excess as needed. Place cookies onto prepared rack, and decorate with swirls of melted milk chocolate. (Alternatively, pour melted chocolate on top of cookies to cover each of them, and place on prepared rack. Collect remaining chocolate, and use to decorate more cookies.) Let stand until set. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

PISTO SPICES MIX

Makes 3 tablespoons

- 5 teaspoons (10 grams) ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground nutmeg
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) whole cloves

1. In a mortar or coffee grinder, grind all ingredients until cloves are also pulverized. Store in a small glass jar at room temperature.

Photo by Roberta Dall'Alba





GINGER CREAMS

Makes 18 cookies

Recipe by Lauren Newsome

Filled to the brim with smoky, sweet molasses, warm spices, and a little pepper for a spicy kick, these cookies are an ode to classic gingerbread cake. Dusted with a thick coat of cinnamon sugar and finished off with a drizzle of tangy lemon glaze, these thick, cakey gems have all the makings of becoming your new holiday favorite.

Cookies:

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup (57 grams) all-vegetable shortening
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- ¼ cup (85 grams) molasses
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) whole milk, room temperature
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon, divided
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
- ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar

Glaze:

- ¾ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, shortening, and brown sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, and beat for 1 minute. Beat in molasses, milk, and vanilla until combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, baking soda, 1 teaspoon (2 grams) cinnamon, salt, cloves, nutmeg, and white pepper. Add half of flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at medium-low speed until barely combined; scrape sides of bowl. Add remaining flour mixture, and beat at low speed until just combined. Stir dough with a rubber spatula, making sure to incorporate any dough that has settled at bottom of bowl. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour. (Dough will be very soft.)

3. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. In a small bowl, stir together granulated sugar and remaining ½ teaspoon (1 gram) cinnamon.

5. Scoop dough by 2½ tablespoonfuls (about 47 grams each), and roll into balls. Roll balls in cinnamon sugar to coat, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

7. Bake, one batch at a time, until centers are puffed and cracked and edges are set, about 13 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.

8. For glaze: In another small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, lemon juice, and salt. Spoon glaze onto cooled cookies, and let stand until set before serving. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

PRO TIP

These cookies get their cake-like puffiness from the addition of shortening. Substituting shortening for butter will result in a flatter, crinkle-like cookie.

Photo by Lauren Newsome

ANISEED ROSQUITAS

Makes 34 cookies

Recipe by Lorena Salinas

These crispy cookies trigger a lot of memories for me. These cookies are the kind you find in small family-owned bakeries and bodegas. They're not massively produced yet, and that gives them a special place in my heart. Anise seed can be strong for some people, but I swear the result is very delicate and just delicious.

- ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water**
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground anise seed**
- 2½ cups plus 1 tablespoon (300 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon (80 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) salt**
- ¾ cup plus 2 teaspoons (180 grams) cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes**
- 2 large egg yolks (38 grams)**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water**
- 2 tablespoons (18 grams) sesame seeds**

- 1.** In a small bowl, combine ½ cup (120 grams) boiling water and anise seed. Let cool completely.
- 2.** In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, and salt until combined. Add cold butter. Using your fingers, pinch butter with dry ingredients until there are no large bits of butter left. (Mixture should resemble wet sand.) Add anise seed mixture and 1 egg yolk (18 grams). Using a spatula, stir until combined (or almost combined). Knead in bowl just until dough comes together. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 3.** Position oven rack in top third of oven. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
- 4.** Divide dough into 20-gram (about 2-teaspoon) portions. Divide 1 portion in half; on a lightly floured surface, roll each half into a long thread. Twist together, and join ends to make a sort of wreath. Repeat with remaining dough, reflouring surface as needed. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
- 5.** In a small bowl, whisk together 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water and remaining egg yolk (19 grams); brush egg wash onto cookies. Sprinkle sesame seeds on top.
- 6.** Bake until golden, 15 to 18 minutes. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Photo by Lorena Salinas





CINNAMON TEA CAKES

Makes 22 cookies

Recipe by Lauren Newsome

A Southern holiday table would not be complete without the addition of the rich, buttery tea cake. Tea cakes hold a special place in my heart, as they were a huge favorite and the cookie of choice of both my grandmother and great-grandmother. Lightly sweetened, with soft, pillowy centers and filled with warm cinnamon and tangy buttermilk, these are the ultimate Southern delicacy.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar, plus more for sprinkling
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2½ teaspoons (5 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) whole buttermilk
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking soda, and salt. In a small measuring cup, stir together buttermilk and vanilla. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating until just combined after each addition. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 4 hours. (Dough should be very sticky after mixing but will firm as it chills.)

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Scoop dough by 2½ tablespoonfuls (about 47 grams each), and roll into balls. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Sprinkle top of dough balls with sugar. Refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes.

5. Bake, one batch at a time, until centers are puffed and edges are light brown and set, 10 to 14 minutes. Let cool on pan for 3 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

Photo by Lauren Newsome

MAPLE GINGERSNAP COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

A classic gingersnap cookie with a Canadian maple twist! This cookie is perfectly chewy in the center and crisp around the edges. For added texture, I like to roll the cookies in a coarse raw sugar, but granulated sugar will do the trick.

¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
3 tablespoons (63 grams) maple syrup
2 tablespoons (42 grams) molasses
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
2 cups (250 grams) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking soda
2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
Raw sugar, for rolling

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until creamy, about 5 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add maple syrup, molasses, egg, and vanilla. Beat until combined.
2. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, ginger, cinnamon, salt, and nutmeg. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until dough comes together. Cover and refrigerate until firm, about 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a 3-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough. Roll in raw sugar. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans, and press down to flatten.
5. Bake for 5 minutes. Tap pans against counter to create crinkles, and bake until edges are golden, 5 to 7 minutes more. Let cool completely on pans.

Photo by Marcella DiLonardo

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MINCEMEAT OATMEAL COOKIES

Makes 15 cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

Mincemeat, to those outside the UK, can sound strange, as it actually contains no meat (not since the late 19th century). Instead, it is a mix of dried fruit, candied peel, alcohol, sugar, suet (a traditional type of fat), and spices. Traditionally, it is used in a simple individual pie served at Christmas. Here, the mincemeat is used as a replacement for raisins and a little of the sugar in a classic oatmeal raisin cookie. It makes a super soft cookie, with gentle spicing, which is a brilliant way of using up the excess mincemeat all Brits seem to end up with once Christmas is over.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (174 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (207 grams) whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (250 grams) old-fashioned oats
- 1 cup (300 grams) mincemeat*

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until light and creamy, about 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, and beat until well combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until combined. Add oats and mincemeat, and beat until evenly distributed. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, 2 to 4 hours or preferably overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Using a $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until edges are golden and centers are set but still a little paler, 17 to 18 minutes. Let cool on pans for 15 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

**We tested with Tiptree Mincemeat, which can be found in some grocery stores and ordered at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).*

Photo by Edd Kimber

Big on Bars

THESE SLICE-AND-SERVE TREATS FEATURE FLAVORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD, WITH
BAUMKUCHEN-INSPIRED BARS FROM GERMANY AND CHOCOLATE-PEANUT BROWNIE
BARS INSPIRED BY A FAVORITE NEW ZEALAND CANDY





Gingerbread
Cookie Bars
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FAIRY BREAD BUBBLE SLICE

Makes 12 bars

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

Rice Bubble Slice (what we call Rice Krispies Treats in New Zealand) and fairy bread (white sandwich bread with margarine and sprinkles) are both New Zealand children's birthday party treats, so I had to combine them, and the result is magical. Rice Bubble Slice is made with honey rather than marshmallows to bind, and the sprinkles on the top give it the perfect crunchy finish.

- 5 cups (150 grams) crisp rice cereal
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (174 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (178 grams) unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons (63 grams) honey
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste or (2 grams) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- Nonpareil sprinkles

1. Spray a 9-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Secure with binder clips, if desired.
2. In a large bowl, place cereal.
3. In a medium heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat sugar, butter, and honey over medium heat, stirring frequently with a spatula, until butter is melted and mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, stirring constantly, until a candy thermometer registers 235°F (113°C), about 2 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in vanilla bean paste or extract and salt until combined. Pour over cereal, and stir until evenly coated.
4. Transfer mixture to prepared pan, and smooth down with a spatula. Using a piece of parchment paper, flatten surface, pressing down hard to make sure cereal mixture is firmly packed together. Immediately top with sprinkles. Let stand until almost set, about 45 minutes. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars. Best served same day.

Photo by Erin Clarkson

STRAWBERRY BADAM KATLI BARS

Makes 35 to 38 bars

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is one of the biggest festivals that my family and I have been celebrating since I was a little kid. Diwali signifies the victory of good over evil, and there are a lot of mythological stories revolving around this beautiful festival that brings people from all walks of life together in the vibrant country of India. With Diwali in mind, and the famous Neapolitan ice cream in mind (with its pretty pink strawberry, vanilla, and chocolate flavors), I wanted to create a multidimensional mithai, or Indian sweet, with a fusion twist. The flavors of strawberry, almonds, cardamom, saffron, and chocolate all marry well together!

Cookie layer:

- 1½ cups (167 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) sifted Dutch process cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt
- ½ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) olive oil
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

Sugar glue:

- 3 tablespoons (21 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) water

Badam katli (almond katli):

- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 6 tablespoons (90 grams) water
- ¼ teaspoon cardamom seeds, coarsely ground in a mortar with a pestle
- 2 cups (192 grams) almond flour
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) neutral oil* or ghee
- Pinch saffron

White chocolate layer:

- 8 ounces (226 grams) baking white chocolate
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) coconut oil
- 2 tablespoons (6 grams) freeze-dried strawberry powder, plus more for sprinkling
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) strawberry extract
- 1 drop dusty rose gel food coloring*

Edible gold foil

1. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan; spray parchment.
2. For cookie layer: In a medium bowl, whisk together all-purpose flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt until combined.
3. In another medium bowl, whisk together brown sugar, melted butter, granulated sugar, and olive oil until well combined. Whisk in vanilla until combined. Add flour mixture in two additions, whisking until combined after each addition. Using a flat offset spatula or the bottom of a measuring cup, press dough into bottom of prepared pan.
4. Bake until edges are set but centers are still soft, about 11 minutes. Forcefully tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter 2 to 3 times. Let cool completely.
5. Sugar glue: In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) water until smooth.
6. For badam katli: In a medium saucepan or skillet, stir together granulated sugar, 6 tablespoons (90 grams) water, and cardamom. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves and mixture comes to a boil, 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce heat to medium, and add almond flour; cook, stirring constantly with a rubber spatula and pressing mixture against pan, until mixture pulls away from sides of pan as you are stirring it, 1 to 2 minutes. (Mixture will be sticky initially). Add neutral oil or ghee and saffron, and cook, stirring and pressing constantly, until mixture pulls away again from sides of pan as you are stirring it, about 3 minutes. (Mixture will not be as sticky. Do not overmix; otherwise, as the mixture cools down, it will dry out and harden.)
7. Immediately turn out mixture onto a large sheet of parchment paper, and slightly spread it out. Fold excess parchment over mixture until completely covered. Place folded side down to seal in moisture as it cools. Let cool enough to handle, 5 to 7 minutes.
8. Using a plastic bench scraper or greased hands, knead mixture until smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Using bench scraper or your greased fingers, spread into a rough square shape. Place another sheet of parchment paper on top, and roll to about ¼-inch thickness. Measure a rough 8-inch square. If necessary, use a bench scraper to remove excess dough. (You can keep the scraps on the side to munch on later.)
9. Using a pastry brush, brush sugar glue onto cookie layer in pan. Quickly invert badam katli layer on parchment onto cookie layer in pan. (Some of the dough will break. Simply place it in the unfilled corners and even out the layer.) Using an offset spatula or the bottom of a measuring cup, smooth out badam katli layer on top of cookie layer.
10. For white chocolate layer: In a small microwave-safe bowl, heat white chocolate and coconut oil on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth (1 to



1½ minutes total). Add strawberry powder, strawberry extract, and food coloring, and stir with a rubber spatula until well combined.

11. Pour white chocolate mixture over badam katli layer. Using an offset spatula, spread white chocolate mixture evenly. Vigorously tap pan on a kitchen towel-lined counter 2 to 3 times to settle and spread mixture. Sprinkle strawberry powder all over top. Refrigerate until white chocolate layer is set, 30 to 40 minutes, or up to overnight.

12. Gently add edible gold foil to top of bar. (You will have to add a few squares to cover the layer here and there.)

13. Remove from pan, and using a stainless steel ruler and a sharp knife, measure and cut straight lines 1 inch apart across bar. Starting at a left hand corner, using ruler and

knife, measure and cut straight lines 1 inch apart diagonally across bar to get diamond-shaped bars. (You will have some end pieces that are not diamond-shaped.) Store in an airtight container in a single layer for up to 10 days.

**We used vegetable oil, but canola oil, grapeseed oil, etc. can be used. We used Americolor Soft Gel Paste Food Color in Dusty Rose.*

PRO TIP

Replace the strawberry powder-topped white chocolate layer with a chocolate of your choice.

Photo by Amisha Gurbani



GINGERBREAD COOKIE BARS

Makes 16 bars

Recipe by Mike Johnson

These Gingerbread Cookie Bars are soft, chewy, and topped with a delicious Cream Cheese Frosting. The best part? The recipe comes together quickly and then you just dump the dough into a pan and press flat. No dough balls, no baking sheets going in and out of the oven every 10 minutes, just super simple steps!

⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon (79 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, melted
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons (56 grams) molasses
2 tablespoons (28 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt
½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)
Garnish: holiday sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray, or line pan with parchment paper.

2. In a large bowl, whisk together granulated sugar, melted butter, molasses, brown sugar, and vanilla until well combined. Add egg yolk, and whisk until combined. Sift together flour, cinnamon, baking soda, salt, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves over sugar mixture, and using a rubber spatula, fold until just combined. (Dough will be very thick.) Using slightly wet hands, press dough evenly into prepared pan.

3. Bake until center is set and no longer jiggles when you shake pan, 17 to 20 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Spread Cream Cheese Frosting on top, and garnish with holiday sprinkles, if desired. Cut into bars. For cleaner cuts, refrigerate before cutting. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 1 cup

4 ounces (113 grams) cream cheese, softened
¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, softened
½ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste
⅛ teaspoon fine sea salt
2 cups (240 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese, butter, vanilla bean paste, and salt at medium-high speed until fluffy and combined, about 2 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add confectioners' sugar, about ½ cup (60 grams) at a time, beating until combined and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

Photo by Mike Johnson

BAUMKUCHEN SPITZEN

Makes 32 bars

Recipe by Audrey Leonard

Baumkuchen Spitzen are a labor of love but incredibly worth it. These traditional cookies are based on the classic Baumkuchen, named because of the many thin layers that are baked one on top of the other, resembling tree rings. They are slightly flavored with almond, rum, and apricot and then dipped in dark chocolate, creating the perfect harmony of flavors.

- 5 ounces (150 grams) marzipan, torn into small pieces
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) rum*
- 1 cup plus 1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons (250 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract
- 6 large eggs (300 grams), cold and separated
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) fine sea salt
- 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon (152 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoons (50 grams) apricot jam
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water
- 10.5 ounces (300 grams) 70% cacao dark chocolate, chopped into ¼-inch pieces

1. Butter a 9-inch square baking pan. Cut an 11x9-inch rectangle of parchment paper. Place parchment in prepared pan so it extends 1 inch up two sides of pan, and press it in so it sticks to butter.
2. In a small saucepan, heat marzipan and rum over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture becomes a thick paste. (There should no longer be any chunks of marzipan visible.) Pour into a shallow dish, and let cool until ready to use.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and almond extract at medium speed until light and creamy, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add cold egg yolks, two at a time, beat until well combined after each addition. Add slightly cooled marzipan mixture in two additions, and beat at medium speed until combined after each addition. Transfer to a large bowl.
4. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to broil. (If possible, set the broil temperature to 450°F [230°C].)
5. Clean bowl of stand mixer. Using the whisk attachment, beat at medium speed until mixture starts to become frothy; increase mixer speed to high, and beat until stiff peaks form.
6. Add egg white mixture to egg yolk mixture in two additions, folding with a flat rubber spatula until no white streaks remain after each addition. (Be careful not to knock out all of the air.) Add flour, and fold until combined.

7. Spread ⅓ cup (about 70 grams) batter in bottom of prepared pan. (It will be a very thin layer, but do your best to spread it evenly across pan.)
8. Bake until surface has at least a few spots that are golden brown, 1½ to 3 minutes. (See Note. I recommend turning the oven light on so you can watch the layer.) Place on a wire rack. Scoop ⅓ cup (about 70 grams) batter on top of baked layer. (It's easiest to scoop it in four parts into the four corners.) Using a spoon, carefully spread batter. (You will notice it start to melt—that's OK! Use an oven mitt to rotate the pan as needed to carefully spread the batter.) Bake for 1½ to 3 minutes. (Try to rotate the pan 90 degrees every time you place it back in the oven so that it bakes evenly.) Repeat procedure with remaining batter. (It should be 12 to 14 layers.) Place on a wire rack.
9. In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine jam and 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water. Heat on high for 10 to 15 seconds; strain through a fine-mesh sieve into another small bowl.
10. Using a pastry brush or a spoon, brush jam mixture over surface of hot baumkuchen. Let cool completely. Cover and refrigerate cooled cake until chilled and fully set, at least 1 hour.
11. Using excess parchment as handles, remove baumkuchen from pan, and place on a cutting board. Using a long sharp knife, cut ¼ inch off each side. Cut baumkuchen into 16 squares. Cut each square diagonally.
12. Line a plate or baking sheet, big enough for all the pieces but small enough to fit in your refrigerator, with parchment paper.
13. In a microwave-safe bowl, place chocolate. Heat on high in 20-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and smooth. Using a fork, dip triangles, one at a time, into melted chocolate, tapping fork on edge of bowl a few times to let excess drip off. (If you want the chocolate to be extra thin, use the smooth side of a butter knife to scrape off the excess chocolate.) Carefully place dipped triangles on prepared plate or pan. Refrigerate until chocolate is hardened and set, at least 30 minutes. Serve chilled or at room temperature. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**To make this alcohol-free, substitute water for rum.*

Note: The reason for the range of baking time is that every time the oven door is opened, it loses heat; therefore, the baking time can vary for each layer—so never walk away from it.

Photo by Audrey Leonard





SUGAR PIE SQUARES

Makes 20 bars

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

A French Canadian snow day staple is sugar pie, which is exactly what it sounds like. This recipe transforms the classic dessert into bite-size bars, perfect for any cookie exchange.

Crust:

- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon (3 grams) fine sea salt
- ½ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

Filling:

- 1½ cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Garnish: smoked flaked sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
2. For crust: In the work bowl of a food processor, place flour, granulated sugar, and fine salt; pulse until combined. Add cold butter and vanilla; pulse until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Press mixture into bottom of prepared pan, shaping into an even layer with a slightly raised edge. Poke all over with a fork.
3. Bake for 10 minutes. Leave oven on.
4. For filling: In a large bowl, whisk together brown sugar, cream, eggs, melted butter, cornstarch, vanilla, and kosher salt until well combined. Pour over crust.
5. Bake until top is set but center still jiggles, 20 to 25 minutes. (Deep coloring and bubbling at edges is normal.) Garnish with smoked salt, if desired. Let cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate until set, 4 to 6 hours.
6. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars.

Photo by Marcella DiLonardo

PEANUT BROWNIE COOKIE BARS

Makes 9 bars

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

Peanut brownies are the name we use for a peanut chocolate cookie in New Zealand. It was one of the first things I learned to bake and was often my go-to when I was younger. I have turned them into a cookie bar: a chocolate cookie base filled with peanuts and milk chocolate. Pure nostalgia but now in a bar form.

- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon (127 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature**
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¼ cup plus 2 teaspoons (65 grams) firmly packed light or dark brown sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- ¾ cup (94 grams) all-purpose flour**
- ⅓ cup plus 2 tablespoons (35 grams) Dutch process cocoa powder**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder**
- 5.3 ounces (150 grams) 52% cacao milk chocolate, coarsely chopped**
- 4.5 ounces (130 grams) roasted salted peanuts, coarsely chopped**
- Garnish: coarsely chopped milk chocolate**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Secure with binder clips, if desired.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Beat in egg until combined.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, sift together flour, cocoa, salt, and baking powder. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at medium speed until just combined. Add chocolate and peanuts, and beat at low speed until combined. Transfer to prepared pan, and smooth down with a spatula or an offset spatula. Garnish with chocolate, if desired. Remove binder clips, if using.
- 4.** Bake until edges are set, 25 to 28 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

Photo by Erin Clarkson



Frosted & Iced

THOUGH EACH OF THESE COOKIES COULD EASILY STAND ALONE, RICH, VELVETY FROSTINGS, ICINGS, AND BUTTERCREAMS ADD AN EXTRA BIT OF HOLIDAY CHEER TO TURN THESE COOKIES INTO SOMETHING TRULY SPECIAL



Classic Iced
Christmas Cookies
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SPICED COOKIE WREATH CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cookie cake

This is the jumbo frosted gingerbread cookie of your dreams. Resembling a holly-dotted wreath, this showstopping treat deserves a place of honor on the holiday spread.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (140 grams) unsalted butter, melted and cooled for 10 minutes
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (110 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
1 teaspoon (3 grams) tightly packed lemon zest
1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
3 tablespoons (63 grams) molasses (not blackstrap)
 $1\frac{3}{4}$ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger
1 teaspoon (3 grams) cornstarch
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground cinnamon
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
Citrus Buttercream (recipe follows)
Garnish: assorted holiday sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Spray a 9-inch round cake pan with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together melted butter, sugars, and lemon zest until combined. Add egg and molasses; whisk until well combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ginger, cornstarch, salt, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, baking powder, and baking soda. Gradually fold flour mixture into butter mixture just until combined.
4. Spoon dough into a large pastry bag; cut a 1-inch opening in tip. Pipe dough evenly into prepared pan. Using a sheet of plastic wrap pressed directly onto surface, spread and press dough into an even layer. Discard plastic wrap.
5. Bake until edges are golden brown and top appears dry, 13 to 16 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes.

Carefully remove from pan, and let cool completely, parchment side down, on a wire rack. (Center may sink slightly as it cools.)

6. Spoon green Citrus Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with a $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch open star piping tip (Ateco #828). Spoon red Citrus Buttercream into a pastry bag fitted with a $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch open star piping tip (Ateco #821). Pipe green buttercream as desired around edges of cooled cookie. Decorate with red buttercream as desired. Garnish with sprinkles, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days, or refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 5 days. If refrigerating, let come to room temperature before serving.

CITRUS BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 2 cups

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (4 grams) tightly packed lemon zest
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
 $2\frac{2}{3}$ cups (280 grams) confectioners' sugar
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons (37.5 grams) heavy whipping cream
Red gel food coloring*
Black gel food coloring*
Green gel food coloring*
Yellow gel food coloring*

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, lemon zest, and salt at medium speed until creamy, about 1 minute, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar alternately with cream, beginning and ending with confectioners' sugar, beating until combined after each addition. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until fluffy, about 3 minutes.
2. Spoon 3 tablespoons (38 grams) buttercream into a small bowl; stir in red and black food coloring until desired red shade is reached. Stir green, yellow, and black food coloring into remaining buttercream until desired green color is reached.

**We used Wilton Icing Color in Red-Red, Black, Kelly Green, and Lemon Yellow.*

FROLLE DI SANTA LUCIA

Makes 30 to 40 cookies

Recipe by Roberta Dall'Alba

Frolle di Santa Lucia are simply shortcrust pastry cookies (frollini) in different Christmas shapes. What matters is the cute tradition behind it. On the night before December 13, the Santa Lucia (Saint Lucy) holiday, kids usually leave these frollini as an offering to the saint. Some instead leave an empty plate so Santa Lucia can fill it with these delicious frollini. You know how traditions work: everyone has their own, after all. I decided to make them even more delicious and flavorful by making a ginger-lemon version.

Cookies:

- 2¼ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (141 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 extra-large egg yolks (42 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) tightly packed lemon zest (about ½ lemon)

Glaze:

- 1 large pasteurized egg white* (30 grams), room temperature
- 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) fresh lemon juice

Garnish: Silver nonpareils

1. For cookies: In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat flour, confectioners' sugar, cold butter, egg yolks, ginger, salt, and lemon zest at low speed until slightly incorporated; increase mixer speed to medium (use the lid of the stand mixer to prevent the flour from "flying," if necessary), and beat until you get a nice malleable dough. (Dough will appear dry at first but will come together; dough should not be sticky.)
2. Turn out dough, and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Line several baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Turn out dough onto a sheet of parchment paper; place another sheet of parchment on top, and roll dough to ¼-inch thickness. (The dough is delicate and could crumble a bit, but that's OK; once baked, the cookies will be perfect.) Using desired holiday cutters, cut dough, and place about 1 inch apart on prepared pans. (If dough is too soft, refrigerate for about 10 minutes.)
5. Bake for 10 to 18 minutes. (The bake time will depend on the size of your cookies. Check the oven after 10 minutes; keep baking if they're too pale.) Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. For glaze: In a medium bowl, place egg white. Gradually add confectioners' sugar and ½ teaspoon lemon juice, whisking with a small whisk until you get a thick consistency. (Lift whisk, and drizzle glaze; ribbon of glaze will hold shape on surface for a few seconds.)
7. Transfer glaze to a pastry bag fitted with a ¼-inch round piping tip. Decorate cooled cookies as desired, and garnish with nonpareils, if desired. Place on wire rack, and let stand until glaze is set. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

**Pasteurized egg whites have been gently heated to kill harmful bacteria without cooking the actual egg, reducing the risk of salmonella.*

Photo by Roberta Dall'Alba





SMALL-BATCH BLACK-AND-WHITE COOKIES

Makes 8 cookies

Recipe by Mike Johnson

These soft and tender black-and-white cookies are a bakery classic, especially in New York City. They're halfway between a cake and a cookie, loaded with vanilla flavor, and topped with sweet vanilla and chocolate icings. There's actually not a lot of work that goes into these cookies; just make sure you're patient and let the icing set to a nice matte finish before serving or storing the cookies. I promise they're worth the wait!

- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking powder
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) fine sea salt
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons (125 grams) granulated sugar
 - 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) buttermilk, room temperature
- Black-and-White Glazes (recipe follows)

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (165°C). Line two baking sheets with parchment paper, then set them aside.
2. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt, then set aside the bowl. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, or in a large bowl using a handheld mixer, cream the butter and sugar together on medium speed until the mixture is light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla bean paste until combined. With the mixer running on low speed, slowly stream in the buttermilk and beat until it's completely incorporated. Add the dry ingredients and beat until they are just incorporated. The dough will be thinner than traditional cookie dough; (it will be more similar to a thick, fluffy cake batter).

3. Using a large (3-tablespoon) spring-loaded cookie scoop, portion out the dough into 8 rounded dough balls, placing 4 on each prepared baking sheet. Bake the cookies for 12 to 14 minutes, or until the bottoms are a light golden brown. Cool the cookies on the pans for 10 minutes, then remove them to a wire rack to cool completely.

4. Once completely cool, flip each cookie over so that the flat side is facing up. Frost one-half of each cookie with the white icing. After the icing has dried, frost the other half with the chocolate icing. Allow the cookies to rest at room temperature until the icing is completely dry to the touch. Store leftovers in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 5 days.

BLACK-AND-WHITE GLAZES

Makes about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (90 grams) powdered sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon plus $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (11 grams) light corn syrup
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon vanilla bean paste
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) milk, divided
- 2 tablespoons (10 grams) unsweetened natural or Dutch-process cocoa powder

1. In a medium bowl whisk together the powdered sugar, light corn syrup, and vanilla bean paste until combined. Thin it out with about 2 to 3 teaspoons (10–15 grams) of milk, as needed. Pour half of the icing into a separate bowl and add the cocoa powder. Thin the chocolate icing with 2 to 3 teaspoons (10–15 grams) of milk, as needed, until it's the same consistency as the white icing.

Note: *This recipe yields a small amount of glaze. If you'd like to have more to work with, simply double the glaze recipe.*

Photo by Mike Johnson

(Adapted from Simple Small-Batch Baking, Page Street Publishing, 2022)

BRANDY BUTTER-FROSTED SUGAR COOKIES

Makes 12 cookies

Recipe by Edd Kimber

Brandy butter is one of the most traditional accompaniments to some classic British Christmas desserts, things like Christmas pudding and mincepies. A sweetened butter that is spiked with brandy is served cold alongside a hot dessert, and as the butter melts, it creates a rich, buttery sauce. These cookies are a US/UK mash-up, where the classic American frosted sugar cookie meets British Christmas flavours. If you don't have brandy on hand, you could use any brown liquor you'd like; they'd be great with a dark rum or even almond liqueur.

Cookies:

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature**
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) sour cream, room temperature**
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract**
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) fine sea salt**

Buttercream:

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150 grams) unsalted butter, softened**
- Pinch fine sea salt**
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (300 grams) confectioners' sugar**
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) brandy**
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- 1 teaspoon (6 grams) vanilla bean paste**

Garnish: assorted holiday sprinkles

- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 (18x13-inch) baking sheets with parchment paper.**
- 2. For cookies:** In a large bowl, beat butter with a mixer at medium speed until soft and creamy. Add granulated sugar, and beat until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and egg yolk, and beat until fully combined. Add sour cream and extracts, and beat until combined.
- 3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed just until combined. Using a $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Using wet hands, press each mound into a puck shape.**
- 4. Bake until edges are just beginning to brown, 10 to 13 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Carefully remove from pans, and let cool completely on a wire rack.**
- 5. For buttercream:** In a large bowl, beat butter and salt with a mixer at medium speed until soft and creamy. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add brandy, cream, and vanilla bean paste, and beat until combined. (The buttercream is a little looser than classic American buttercream, but the moistness helps to keep the cookies from drying out.) Spread buttercream onto cooled cookies, and garnish with sprinkles, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

Photo by Edd Kimber





CLASSIC ICED CHRISTMAS COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Kate Wood

Few things evoke the essence of holiday baking quite like a classic cutout cookie. This recipe features a soft dough that holds its shape well through baking. The icing is equally simple and requires just a few ingredients. For a festive Christmas cookie, it truly doesn't get better than these.

- 1 cup (227 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt

Classic Sugar Cookie Icing (recipe follows)

Garnish: assorted sprinkles, colored sanding sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cold butter and granulated sugar at medium-low speed until a smooth, thick mixture forms, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, and beat at medium speed until combined; scrape sides and bottom of bowl.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. Add flour mixture to butter mixture, and beat at low speed until a rough dough comes together.
4. Turn out dough, and bring dough together into a flat, smooth disk. Lightly flour work surface and a rolling pin; roll dough to ⅛- to ¼-inch thickness. Using

desired 3-inch cutters dipped in flour, cut dough, rerolling scraps, and place about 2 inches apart on prepared pans. (If dough gets soft at all, freeze until firm, 5 to 10 minutes.)

5. Bake, one batch at a time, until edges are firm and beginning to turn golden, about 10 minutes. Let cool completely on pans.

6. Place Classic Sugar Cookie Icing in a pastry bag fitted with a small round piping tip (Wilton No. 3). Pipe decorations or designs onto cooled cookies, and garnish with sprinkles and sanding sugar, if desired. Let stand until set, 4 to 6 hours. Store in an airtight container for up to 4 days.

CLASSIC SUGAR COOKIE ICING

Makes 1½ cups

- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 5 to 6 tablespoons (75 to 90 grams) whole milk
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) almond extract
- Gel food coloring (optional)

1. In a large bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, 4 tablespoons (60 grams) milk, and extracts until combined; add up to remaining 1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 30 grams) milk, 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) at a time, until desired consistency is reached. (For icing that is fit for piping, drag your whisk or a knife through center of bowl of icing; icing should slowly pool back together, all traces of knife or whisk gone after about 10 seconds. If it's too thick, add a bit more milk.) Add food coloring (if using). Store in an airtight container until ready to use.

Photo by Kate Wood

MARBLED DOODH MASALA COOKIES

Makes 24 cookies

Recipe by Amisha Gurbani

Inspired by the famous Indian dessert drink masala doodh, which is essentially warmed or chilled milk mixed with nuts, spices, and saffron, these cookies are delicately spiced with the Doodh Masala (spice mixture), and marbling the icing makes them holiday-ready, especially for cookie exchange parties. Have them with a chilled glass of milk or a cup of chai for that touch of decadence.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1½ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
- ⅓ cup (80 grams) Doodh Masala (recipe follows)
- ½ teaspoon (3 grams) salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking powder
- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar, plus more if needed
- 6 tablespoons (105 grams) warm water, plus more if needed

Fuchsia gel food coloring*

Orange gel food coloring*

Gold gel food coloring*

Food-safe paintbrush

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at low speed, gradually increasing mixer speed to high, until light, fluffy, and pale yellow, about 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg and vanilla, and beat until combined, about 1 minute. Using a rubber spatula, scrape sides of bowl, and bring butter mixture into middle of bowl.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, Doodh Masala, salt, and baking powder until combined. Add flour mixture to butter mixture in two additions, whisking until combined after each addition.
3. Turn out dough, and divide in half (about 495 grams each). Shape each half into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours.
4. Position oven rack in bottom of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Turn out half of dough onto a lightly floured surface. Flour top of dough. Roll into about a ¼-inch-thick circle. Using a 3-inch fluted round cutter or other desired cutter

dipped in flour, cut dough, rerolling scraps until all dough is used. Place at least 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

6. Bake, one batch at a time, until edges are golden brown, 12 to 13 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.

7. Repeat procedure with remaining dough.

8. In another medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and 6 tablespoons (90 grams) warm water until smooth and well combined. (The consistency should be slightly thinner than glue. If it is too thick, add up to 2 teaspoons [10 grams] warm water, 1 teaspoon [5 grams] at a time, to thin it out slightly. If it is too thin, add confectioners' sugar, ¼ cup [30 grams] at a time, until it is the right consistency.) Using separate wooden picks, add a small drop of pink food coloring and a small drop of orange food coloring. Using a clean wooden pick, swirl colors in icing to form a nice pattern. (Do not overdo it.)

9. Dip cooled cookies, upside down, straight into icing, letting excess drip off. Let stand until set, about 1 hour.

10. In a small bowl, place 2 to 4 drops gold color. Dip paintbrush into gold color, and flick with a finger of the other hand onto each cookie to make droplets. Repeat for all cookies. Let stand until dry, about 1 hour. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

**We used Americolor Soft Gel Paste Food Color in Fuchsia, Orange, and Gold.*

Note: The unbaked cookie dough can be refrigerated for up to 1 week. Remove it from the refrigerator about 30 minutes before baking to soften slightly so it is easy to roll it out. You can even bake off each disk on separate days.

DOODH MASALA

Makes 1½ cups

- ½ cup (71 grams) raw unsalted almonds
- ½ cup (71 grams) raw unsalted cashews
- ¼ cup (36 grams) raw unsalted pistachios
- 8 cardamom pods
- 1 heaping teaspoon saffron
- 1 teaspoon (1 gram) grated fresh nutmeg

1. In the container of a high-speed blender, grind all ingredients until finely ground. Transfer to a 12-ounce bottle, and freeze for up to 6 months.

Photo by Amisha Gurbani





HONEY COOKIES

Makes 26 cookies

Recipe by Dikla Frances

These honey-flavored cookies are enhanced with some comforting spices and will melt in your mouth at first bite. What was meant to be a Jewish New Year cookie is now an everyday iconic Israeli treat.

Cookies:

- 1¾ cups (210 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt
- ⅓ cup (73 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ⅓ cup (113 grams) honey
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- ½ cup (112 grams) canola oil
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature and lightly beaten

Glaze:

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water

1. For cookies: In a medium bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir with a fork until combined.
2. In a medium saucepan, stir together brown sugar, honey, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low, and cook until a candy thermometer registers 260°F (71°C), 2 to 3 minutes. (Do not cook mixture past 260°F (71°C), as it will harden and become too difficult to incorporate into a dough.) Remove from heat. Add baking soda. (Mixture will bubble up and turn very light—that's OK.) Stir vigorously for about 5 seconds, then immediately stir in oil. Pour mixture into a large deep bowl, and stir until smooth and dark. Let cool for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring every 1 minute or so. (Mixture should look like an oily, thick caramel that tries to break when you stir it.) Stir in egg; fold in flour mixture. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Position oven rack in bottom third of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Using a 1-tablespoon spring-loaded scoop, scoop dough (about 20 grams each), and roll between your palms. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pans.
5. Bake until puffed and bottoms are golden brown. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.
6. For glaze: In a small deep bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and 3 tablespoons (45 grams) water until smooth.
7. Place wire rack with cookies on top of a rimmed baking sheet. Glaze each cookie with 1 to 2 teaspoons glaze. Best served same day. If storing, store, covered, for up to 5 days.

Note: *The glaze can be as thin or as thick as you would like. For a thin layer, add more water; for a thick glaze, add just 2 tablespoons (30 grams) water.*

Photo by Dikla Frances

Celebratory Classics

CELEBRATE IN STYLE WITH THIS COLLECTION OF CLASSICS, FROM FAMILIAR, FESTIVELY COLORED ICEBOX COOKIES TO POLVORON, A DELECTABLE FILIPINO SHORTBREAD THAT'S SURE TO BECOME A NEW HOLIDAY BAKING STAPLE

Vanilla-Almond
Checkerboard Cookies
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Bumblebees
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RICCIARELLI DI SIENA

Makes 20 cookies

Recipe by Roberta Dall'Alba

These cute cookies are perfect if you love those “melt-in-your-mouth” sweets. They’re made with extremely simple but delicious ingredients, and the nutty flavour of almonds pairs perfectly with the tanginess of the lemon. You’ll love these marzipan cookies.

2 cups plus 1 tablespoon (200 grams) almond flour
1¾ cups (210 grams) confectioners’ sugar, divided
1 teaspoon (4 grams) tightly packed lemon zest (about ½ lemon)
½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
2 large egg whites (60 grams), room temperature
½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
Cornstarch, for dusting

1. In a medium bowl, slightly stir together flour, 1½ cups (180 grams) confectioners’ sugar, lemon zest, and salt with a fork.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites and lemon juice at medium speed for 2 minutes; increase mixer speed to medium-high, and beat until foamy but not stiff, about 1 minute. Add flour mixture and vanilla; using a spatula, gently fold until combined. (The consistency should be like shortbread cookie dough or gnocchi dough: a little bit sticky but malleable. If it’s too soft, gradually add more flour.) Flatten dough, and shape into a disk. Cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 12 hours or overnight.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
4. Generously dust work surface with cornstarch. Turn out dough onto prepared surface, and roll into a thick cylinder, and cut into 20 portions (20 to 25 grams each). (The size of the cylinder matters less than being able to divide it into 20 even portions, so be sure to use a scale to weigh your dough.) Using your hands, shape each portion into a thin oval. Place at least 1 inch apart on prepared pan. (If the dough becomes soft, refrigerate for about 15 minutes.)
5. Using a pastry brush, lightly brush surface of each dough oval with water. Using a fine-mesh sieve, dust with remaining ¼ cup (30 grams) confectioners’ sugar to coat.
6. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes. (Check them after 12 minutes; they should maintain their paleness.) Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

PRO TIP

You can use orange zest instead of lemon zest and add a drop of almond extract instead of vanilla.

Photo by Roberta Dall'Alba

BROWNED BUTTER SUGAR COOKIES

Makes 19 cookies

Recipe by Lauren Newsome

The classic childhood sugar cookie gets a major boost in flavor thanks to the addition of browned butter. Nutty browned butter plays wonderfully with brown sugar, giving these cookies not only an intoxicating aroma but also a rich caramel kick. Generously rolled in a granulated sugar-brown sugar combo, these cookies go the extra mile to deliver an irresistible crunch before giving way to perfectly soft and chewy centers, making them the perfect bite.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter
- 1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- ½ cup (110 grams) plus 1 tablespoon (14 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar, divided
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

1. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Cook, whisking occasionally, until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes. Cook, whisking constantly, until butter turns a medium brown color and has a nutty aroma and milk fat solids fall to bottom of pan. Remove from heat, and whisk for 1 minute. Pour into a heatproof bowl, and let cool completely, 30 to 45 minutes. (Butter should still be liquid after cooling.)
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat browned butter, 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar, and ½ cup (110 grams) brown sugar at medium speed until thoroughly combined, 1 to 2 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, egg yolk, and vanilla, and beat until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking soda, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. (Dough will be very soft.)
4. Preheat oven to 325°F (170°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. In a small bowl, stir together remaining ¼ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar and remaining 1 tablespoon (14 grams) brown sugar.
6. Scoop dough by 2½ tablespoonfuls (about 47 grams each), and roll into balls. Roll balls in sugar mixture to coat, and place 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.
7. Bake, one batch at a time, until centers are pale and puffed and edges are light brown, 10 to 13 minutes. (Centers will appear slightly underbaked.) Let cool on pan for 5 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in airtight container for up to 3 days.

PRO TIP

When rolling your cookie dough balls, roll your dough taller rather than wider. It should look cylindrical in shape. This will help create a thick, chewy center and crispy edges.

Photo by Lauren Newsome





BUMBLEBEES

Makes 24 servings

Recipe by Erin Clarkson

These have a special place in my heart. The recipe was my grandma's and was something I made with her every holiday. These are a coconut, date, and walnut mixture held together with condensed milk and then rolled into little logs (where I think the name comes from). They are then rolled in coconut and baked just to dry them out a little. They are a slightly sticky, delicious project that is great to do with kids.

2¾ cups (231 grams) desiccated coconut, divided
1¾ cups (188 grams) chopped walnuts
1¼ cups (200 grams) pitted dates, finely chopped
⅛ teaspoon kosher salt
1 (14-ounce) can (396 grams) sweetened condensed milk

1. Preheat oven to 210°F (100°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, stir together 2 cups (168 grams) coconut, walnuts, dates, and salt. Add condensed milk, and stir until well combined.
3. In a small bowl, place remaining ¾ cup (63 grams) coconut.
4. Scoop coconut mixture by 2 tablespoonfuls (about 35 grams each), and place on prepared pan. Using slightly wet hands, shape portions into logs with rounded ends. Roll each in coconut. Place evenly spaced apart on prepared pan.
5. Bake until dried out slightly and coconut is beginning to turn golden brown, about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Let cool completely on pan. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

Note: *I find that it is easiest to scoop out all the mixture in one go and then shape all the bumblebees and then roll them all in the coconut to make the least mess.*

Photo by Erin Clarkson

VANILLA-ALMOND CHECKERBOARD COOKIES

Makes 48 to 60 cookies

Sporting a sweet checkerboard pattern, these vanilla- and almond-scented cookies prove it can still be hip to be square.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract
- 3½ cups (416 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- Red gel food coloring*
- Black gel food coloring*
- Green gel food coloring*

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until combined after each addition. Beat in extracts.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until a dough forms and stopping to scrape sides of bowl.
3. Turn out dough onto a large piece of parchment paper. Divide dough into 4 portions (about 230 grams each). Return 1 portion to bowl. Add red and black food coloring, and beat at low speed; repeat just until desired color is reached.
4. Clean bowl of stand mixer and paddle attachment. Place 1 portion plain dough in bowl. Add green and black food coloring, and beat at low speed; repeat just until desired color is reached. Leave remaining 2 dough portions plain.
5. Place 1 dough portion on a sheet of plastic wrap. Shape into a 4½-inch-long, 1½- to 1¾-inch-wide square log. (A plastic bench scraper is a great tool for squaring sides.) Wrap dough log in plastic wrap. Repeat with remaining 3 dough portions. (It is OK if logs are not perfectly square at this point.) Refrigerate for 2 hours.
6. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line 2 to 3 rimmed baking sheets with parchment paper.
7. Using a sharp knife, trim sides of 1 plain dough log to create a 4½-inch-long, 1½-inch-wide square log. (See PRO TIP.) Slice dough log lengthwise into 3 equal strips. Stack strips; cut stacked strips in thirds lengthwise to create 9 equal strips. Wipe knife clean, and repeat procedure with red dough log.

8. Arrange a red strip, a plain strip, and a red strip side by side lengthwise. Stack a plain strip, a red strip, and a plain strip side by side on top of first layer of strips. Stack a red strip, a plain strip, and a red strip side by side on top of second layer of strips to create a checkerboard-patterned rectangular log. Repeat with remaining plain and red dough strips to create another checkerboard-patterned rectangular log, but begin pattern with a plain strip, a red strip, and a plain strip. Gently press together strips of each checkerboard dough log; wrap each log in plastic wrap, and place on a small baking sheet. (Aim for sides to be as flush and flat as possible, but it is fine if some sides are uneven. You will trim them further later.) Freeze for 15 minutes. Repeat procedure with remaining plain and green dough logs.

9. Using a sharp knife, trim ends of 1 dough log. Slice log crosswise into ¼-inch-thick square cookies. Trim and square edges of sliced cookies as needed. (See PRO TIP.) Place 1 to 2 inches apart on prepared pans. Repeat with remaining logs.

10. Bake, one batch at a time, until bottoms are lightly golden, 6 to 8 minutes, rotating pan halfway through baking. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.

**We used Wilton Gel Food Color in Red, Green, and Black. You will likely need more ample amounts of red and green to get the desired shade. Add the black very slowly and sparingly to help deepen the colors, if needed.*

PRO TIP

Save any dough trimmings and squish them together to create a festive, marbled dough. Lightly flour a sheet of parchment paper, and place dough on top. Lightly flour top of dough, and cover with another sheet of parchment; roll to about ¼-inch thickness. Remove top sheet of parchment; using desired cutters, cut dough, and place 1½ to 2 inches apart on parchment paper-lined baking sheets. If dough feels too soft to transfer, refrigerate dough on parchment for 25 to 30 minutes before transferring to baking sheets. Bake at 400°F (200°C) until bottoms are lightly golden, about 6 minutes, rotating pans halfway through baking. Reroll, cut, and chill scraps as needed.





DATE RUGELACH

Makes 40 cookies

Recipe by Dikla Frances

I can't think of a better way to celebrate nature's jewels than with a batch of these Date Rugelach. The dough is a crispy and tender shortbread dough loaded with butter and filled with homemade date spread. You can make it your own and sprinkle with nuts, cinnamon, or even chocolate chips, as long as you don't forget to dust it with a heavy coat of confectioners' sugar.

Date spread:

18 large Medjool dates (225 grams), pitted, stem removed

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup (160 grams) boiling brewed coffee*

Dough:

4 cups (500 grams) all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) salt

3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (250 grams) cold unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces

1 tablespoon (15 grams) vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) water

3 tablespoons (21 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. For date spread: In a deep bowl, place dates; add coffee. Let stand for 2 hours.

2. Strain dates through a fine-mesh sieve, pressing on solids. Place dates in the work bowl of a food processor; process until smooth. Transfer to an airtight container, and refrigerate until cool.

3. Position oven rack in center of oven. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

4. For dough: In a medium bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir with a fork until combined.

5. Transfer 2½ cups (300 grams) flour mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add sugar, and beat at medium speed.

Add cold butter, a few pieces at a time, and oil, and beat until butter is combined and mixture resembles wet sand. Add remaining flour mixture and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) water, and beat at low speed until a smooth dough forms.

6. Turn out dough, and divide into 4 portions (about 215 grams each).

7. Lightly flour work surface and rolling pin. Roll 1 portion of dough into a 10x8-inch rectangle, re-flouring work surface and rolling pin as needed. Spread 3 tablespoons (45 grams) date spread onto dough. Starting with one long side, roll up dough into a log. Place log crosswise on prepared pan. Using a sharp knife, score dough 1 inch apart. Repeat procedure with remaining dough and remaining date spread.

8. Bake until slightly golden and bottom is golden brown, 35 to 40 minutes. (You can cut a piece to see if it is fully baked at the center.) Let cool slightly; using a knife, cut cookies entirely. Let cool completely on pan. Dust with confectioners' sugar, and serve. Store, covered, for up to 2 weeks.

**The same amount of boiling water can be used instead, if desired.*

Notes: You can use store-bought date spread instead of making a homemade one. (It can easily be found at a kosher market.)

If the spread is too thin, cook it on the stove for a few minutes.

Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon into the date spread, or sprinkle crushed toasted walnuts on the spread before rolling up the dough.

When baking, pay close attention to the cookies and not the time; dark cookie pans might need less baking time than lighter ones.

The cookies might tear at the top as they bake for two reasons: you rolled the dough too thin or added too much filling. But it's OK. It's sort of a signature look.

Photo by Dikla Frances

POLVORON

Makes 14 to 16 cookies

Recipe by Maryanne Cabrera

Polvoron, also spelled pulboron or polboron, is a sweet, crumbly cookie made from toasted flour, dry milk, sugar, and butter. It comes in a variety of shapes and flavors. This sweet treat is traditionally served during the holiday season. It is often round or oval-shaped during Christmas and New Year celebrations to symbolize wishes of prosperity and a good future. They are traditionally wrapped in colorful cellophane paper. Polvoron starts with the classic plain flavor. Then, a variety of mix-ins are added to create different flavors, such as cookies and cream, ube crunch, or cashew. Finished cookies are often garnished with chocolate for special occasions.

- 1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (94 grams) packed whole dry milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, melted and warm
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a large shallow skillet, cook flour over medium heat, whisking or stirring frequently, until fragrant and tan in color, 5 to 8 minutes. (The flour may steam during toasting; keep stirring to prevent it from burning.) Remove from heat, and transfer to a heatproof bowl. Whisk in dry milk and sugar. Let cool slightly, 3 to 5 minutes.
2. Add warm melted butter and salt to flour mixture. (Add any desired mix-ins at this point.) Fold until mixture is well combined, powdery, and crumbly.
3. On a parchment paper-lined baking sheet and using an oval-shaped mold, densely pack about 3 tablespoons flour mixture per cookie. (See Notes.) Arrange in a single layer on baking sheet. Freeze for 30 minutes to set.
4. Wrap individual cookies in cellophane, caramel wrappers, or plastic wrap. Serve cookies at room temperature for best crumbly, melt-in-your-mouth texture. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 month, or freeze in an airtight container for up to 3 months.

To make **Cookies and Cream Polvoron**, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (35 grams or about 3 to 4 cookies) crushed cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies in step 2 with the melted butter and salt.

To make **Cashew Polvoron**, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (38 grams) packed ground cashews in step 2 with the melted butter and salt.

To make **Crunchy Ube Polvoron**, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (56 grams) ube powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (7 grams) crisp rice cereal, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 grams) ube extract in step 2 with the melted butter and salt.

To make **Classic Pinipig Polvoron**, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (14 grams) pinipig (toasted young rice) or crisp rice cereal in step 2 with the melted butter and salt.

Notes: Whole dry milk is highly recommended because it produces the richest, creamiest flavor. You may substitute nonfat dry milk or nonfat instant milk. However, the resulting cookie will not be as flavorful.

If the dry milk is flaky or coarse, pulse in the food processor until fine.

The oval stamper used in this recipe is $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. Williams Sonoma Thumbprint Cookie Stamps also work well. Simply press 3 tablespoons flour mixture into cookie stamp; place stamp with flour mixture facing down on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Press down on the stamp's spring-loaded handle to densely pack flour mixture. Gently remove stamp, and repeat as needed.

Photo by Maryanne Cabrera





CHERRY ICEBOX COOKIES

Makes 72 cookies

Recipe by Marcella DiLonardo

These festive Cherry Icebox Cookies are wonderful to make in large batches for the holiday season. Similar in taste to a sugar cookie but with a hint of cherry and almond, they are simple slice-and-bake cookies that freeze incredibly well.

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams), room temperature
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) maraschino cherry juice
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract
- 2¾ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour, sifted
- ½ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
- ½ teaspoon (2 grams) fine sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup (95 grams) chopped red and green candied cherries

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, about 5 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, cherry juice, and extracts. Beat until combined.
2. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until dough comes together. Fold in cherries.
3. Divide dough into 3 portions (about 350 grams each). Shape each into a 10-inch log. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm, about 4 hours.
4. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
5. Slice dough logs into ¼-inch-thick rounds. Place 1 inch apart on prepared pans.
6. Bake until edges begin to brown, about 8 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks.

Photo by Marcella DiLonardo



on the cover

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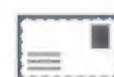
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